

# KOREA'S STRESSED MASSES

Where does the pressure come from? How does it affect people's lives? Is there a solution?

# GROOVE

KOREA

APRIL 2012 - ISSUE 66

## JEONJU FILM FESTIVAL

We sat down with Programmer Yoo Un-seung before one of Asia's biggest film fests

## A ZEN TEMPLESTAY

The ultimate Korean experience: stay at one of the most important temples in the country

## CHERRY BLOSSOM

## SPRING BLOOM

Super Color Super brings in Pictureplane, Pg.Lost & No Age

## KOREAN VERSUS NORTH KOREAN

When the Western media gets it wrong

## INSIDE FANCIULLI

Global electronic icon gives us the inside scoop on his past and present — behind the decks and in the studio

# Out with God

Pastor Daniel Payne came from the Bible Belt of America to lead Open Doors Community Church in Itaewon, the country's only LGBT-affirming Christian congregation for speakers of English.

## CHERRY FESTIVALS

## MUSSEL HEAVEN

At Al Matto, prepare for some of the tastiest mussels on this side of the Han

## ANCIENT REFLECTIONS in Gyeongju

## 20 FOREIGN EXHIBITS

Take your pick from the most detailed calendar of foreign art exhibits in Korea



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# A MATTER OF SURVIVAL

Michael Hurt is the editor-in-chief of Yahae Magazine, one of the most prominent foreign bloggers in the country and a regular contributor to Groove Korea. He's fluent in Korean, has sat on the Presidential Council for National Branding, and founded Yahae Studios, a photo studio in Hongdae. His presence on the peninsula makes the rest of us expats look good. And we nearly lost him.

On the evening of March 3, Michael had a stroke. He would lay paralyzed for three days before being discovered. A co-worker sensed something was wrong and tried calling him when he missed work on Monday, when he was discovered and rushed to the hospital.

Damoni Hurt, Michael's brother, posted this message on his Facebook page that day: "I know a lot of people are concerned with the status of Michael's health. Through the grace of God, Michael is stable and is now in the process of healing and then, ultimately, recovery. Upon return from the United States ... Michael had a stroke. Through the grace of God Michael was able to hang on until Monday when a coworker sensed something after Mike missed work on Friday and Monday. He called Mike multiple times and somehow Mike was able to get to the phone. During the dialogue he knew something was wrong and called 911. The doctors state it's a miracle that Mike is still with us."

Three days. Alone. Pinned. Physically unable to call for help. We're not talking about some old guy that fell down the stairs here. If a colleague hadn't tried calling him repeatedly – and he wasn't somehow able to answer his phone – we might be reading a story about his funeral arrangements instead of his miraculous survival.

There are two things working against us as expats; most of us take our health for granted. If you put yourself in this category, then the time to act is now. Go for a jog, quit smoking, skip the burger this week, get enough sleep. No one will do it for you. Secondly, we're naturally cautious about the people we trust with our über-personal information. My phone number is known to dozens, but my address is known only to a select few. To make matters worse for many English teachers, the nature of the line of work all but guarantees a new address every year, along with co-workers we might never get around to sharing our address with. We may put some trust in our local embassy to get the word out to parents or loved ones back home, but how are they to know something's wrong until it's too late?

So what does an expat do? You look out for each other – pure and simple. If the guy that always shows up for trivia night misses it for no good reason, then that's a good reason for a text. If your study buddy who never misses a chance to conjugate verbs doesn't show to your study session, a phone call might be in order. If your co-worker has missed work more than two days in a row, it's high time to act. If push comes to shove, or if it's been abnormally long, there is definitely a time to get the authorities involved. Do your part, and there's no reason for it to come to that.

Your significant other (and/or a trusted friend or two) should have your current address and phone number somewhere so they can get to it at all times (e-mail it to them now). If you're the sort to leave a key hidden outside your front door, let a couple trusted people know about it. You get bonus points if they also have your parents' (or legal guardians') names and e-mail addresses. Having an "In Case of Emergency" card in your wallet or purse never hurts, either.

Michael's misfortune is a tragic reminder of our vulnerability, which in many cases is only exacerbated by the fact that we are living overseas – away from our families and outside our network of support. But it's one that we can all learn from. Thank God he's okay.



Chris Backe, contributing writer

## HOT ON

[WWW.GROOVEKOREA.COM](http://WWW.GROOVEKOREA.COM)

### Food & Drink: Go veg in your own kitchen

She grabs a set of vegetables and starts peeling, dicing and frying them in her one-room apartment in Seocho, Seoul.

The resulting meal, a salad, a bowl of sweet potatoes, and a spicy mixture of vegetables and rice, is not an elaborate one. That's not her style.

"I'm pretty much a very simple person," says Sae-hee Burke, the author of the Vegan Beats blog. "I go shopping for food every day. I get fresh food."

She attributes this to her New England background, living not far from a market where vegetables and other natural foods were easily accessible. She also says it's due to her inquisitive nature, one that drew her to fresh food and away from animal products.

In just two years, Sae-hee says that veganism, while still a distinct minority lifestyle here, is becoming more and more accepted. Lee Hyori, probably the most popular female singer here over the past decade, is a vegetarian, and online communities such as the Seoul Veggie Club on Facebook have sprung up.

Story by Todd Sharp

*Read it online in April or in print in May.*

### Arts: Best alternative cinemas in Seoul

Have you ever seen a film under a hill or over an intersection? Or been served cookies from a ritzy private booth at CGV? If not, then it is time to step away from your local movie house and try something new. Just be sure to check the language – not all screened films are available in English. Groove Korea reporter Stephanie Potell takes readers on a tour of the city's best alternative cinemas. A sample of her list includes Korea Film Archive, Silver Cinema and Cinematheque. This is a must read for any film buff.

Story by Stephanie Potell

*Read it online in April or in print in May.*

### Destinations: 5 ways to enjoy the outdoors

Looking for something to do now that winter's finally long gone? There's only a small window of opportunity to enjoy this warm weather before the humidity becomes oppressive, yellow dust saturates the air and it rains constantly.

In reality the summer is shorter than it seems, so you may want to plan ahead. A solid mix of adventure and laziness is key to an enjoyable Korean summer. Having a drink and people watching at your local GS 25 or hiking through one of the most beautiful parks in Korea should be on your list. Martin Roche suggests five ways to enjoy the outdoors. Atop his list is island hopping in the West Sea.

Story by Martin Roche

*Read it online in April or in print in May.*

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# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

MEET SOME OF THE PEOPLE WORKING DAY AND NIGHT TO BRING YOUR COMMUNITY TO KOREA.



**Chris Backe**  
USA

Chris Backe is working towards a writing and photography career. His blog, *Chris in South Korea*, focuses on travel and life here, while he enjoys shooting travel and events. He's working on his third book, a travel guide for Korea, and only wears pants when he has to. He lives in Haebangchon, and enjoys being within stumbling distance of Itaewon's watering holes. Chris contributed our guest editorial this month.

**Read Urban**  
USA



Read Urban hails from Virginia, where he spent years cooking in restaurants and learning how to make food from scratch. Since coming to Korea, he has explored the country's culinary landscape, finding new uses for traditional Korean ingredients. His culinary creations include "getnup" pesto, kabocha squash risotto and pork and barley stew. He is a graduate of Virginia Tech. Read writes the monthly column *Urbs & Spices*.



**Paloma Julian**  
Spain

Paloma Julian is a coach, teacher and an ambassador of Spanish food. Every month, she enlightens readers on some new facet of Spanish cooking. She can whip up tortillas with eggs and potatoes, but she'll also have chorizo, Manchego and wine on hand. When she's not cooking, she's coaching high school girls' basketball, teaching Spanish or listening to scary podcasts. Paloma creates the monthly *Squid Ink* recipe column.

**Dan Himes**  
USA



Dan is a Web nerd and Busan resident who has always lived near water. He grew up in Pennsylvania, but no, he isn't Amish. He loves long walks on Haeundae Beach, geeking out in front of his computer and sporting Hawaiian shirts each and every Friday. He enjoys these activities even more with a bottle of makgeolli. Dan is our website technician.



**David Croft**  
Canada

David Croft is a sometimes-musician and seemingly-always teacher. Recording under the guise of The Music Team, he is currently working on the release of his third album, *The Flower of the Fur*. There's a song called "Satan Explains" on it, which was co-written by Jeff Tweedy of Wilco, though Jeff Tweedy doesn't yet know that. David contributed the piece *Korean vs. North Korean*, when the Western media gets it wrong.



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Groove Korea Magazine 2012



## MUST READS

Look for this sign throughout the magazine for articles we recommend this month.

### Zen templestay

Page 72

Hwa Gye Sa's templestay program is one of the most popular in Korea and hundreds of foreigners and Koreans participate every year. The idea was an enormous success and templestays have become a popular addition to Korea's tourism industry.



### Nic Fanciulli interview

Page 32

His tour schedule, production and record label have solidified him as a protagonist for quality dance music. Check with [groovekorea.com](http://groovekorea.com) for up-to-date information on his Asia tour and read this interview to find out what makes Fanciulli tick.



### Korea's stressed masses

Page 16

Where does the pressure come from? How does it affect people's lives? Is there a solution? We interviewed six people to find out.



### Jeonju International Film Festival

Page 36

While it might not have the worldwide acclaim of Cannes or Sundance Film Festival, it has been rightly regarded as one of the most important film festivals in Asia.



### Real bread hits Gyeongnidan

Page 52

The kitchen at The Bakers Table is a craftsman's workshop, filled with raw materials and tools needed to transform them.



# On the COVER

## Out with God

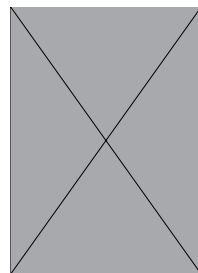
In this month's cover story, Out with God, Ara Cho and James Little take a look at Open Doors Community Church in Itaewon, the country's only LGBT-affirming Christian congregation for speakers of English.

See the full story on Page 62.

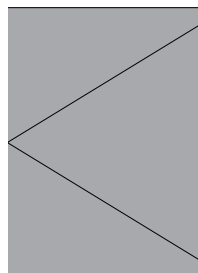


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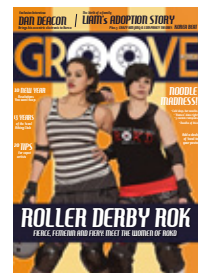
### Our past three issues:



March 2012  
Balloons of hope for North Korea. The Expat Apartment Project.



February 2012  
Top stories: The 3 Wise Monkeys, Seoul Metro Project, Bush interviews.



January 2012  
Top stories: Roller derby ROK, adoption, Dan Deacon interview.



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## The INBOX

What's on your mind? Share your thoughts on a Groove article: Did you love it? Did it suck? Are you planning a charity concert and you want to spread the word? Let us know on our Facebook page or Twitter and we'll print it here. This is your page to get your message out!

Facebook it; tweet it; e-mail it to submissions@groovekorea.com



### FEEDBACK

I think your articles are written better than (we removed magazine's name). (That magazine) is good for sights/sounds/eats. Groove has more relevant articles, especially about the news the mainstream newspapers don't like to cover.

... **Lori Michael**

I'm interested in subscribing to Groove. Also, I would love to get involved with the magazine. You seem to be far and above the best expat magazine around. After taking a look at your archives I am very impressed with the quality of the articles and diverse range of stories. Let me know if submitting a piece is the best way to begin working with Groove. Thank you!

... **Amanda**



### FACEBOOK

Coming from a background of graphic design and publication, I really love seeing real production value and effort being put into such things. I'd love to get my hands on issue #62 especially. Looks really interesting.

... **Sabrina Constance Hill**

◆ RE: Expat Apartment Project

I've lived in the same apartment for more than three years now. Life improved when we stopped living out of suitcases like we were transients - we got some plants, finally decorated with things we found beautiful, got a decent stereo (music is very important to us), got decent linens (sleep is very important to us), and starting cooking like adults. I would never go back. When it comes time to move, well, we'll either hire a shipping container or have a fire sale, but either way, happiness and enjoying quality and the little things in life is the last thing you should let go of if you want to be happy somewhere, especially in a foreign country.

... **Ad al'Adabeie**



### WEBSITE

◆ RE: Girls are not for sale

This is an inspiring story. I'm glad someone in the English media took the time to tell it. Korea has made great strides in its fight against human trafficking and prostitution. It's not a war that's going to be won overnight, but it's something we're taking one community at a time.

... **Amy Lee**

◆ RE: Korean curry quest

I went with a friend and we both thoroughly enjoyed our meal. He got the tandoori chicken and it was fabulous while I opted for the kadai lamb curry - yum!

... **Brooke Taylor**

◆ RE: For North Koreans, balloons of hope

Kudos to this group of volunteers for doing something so simple yet effective to make people's lives better. I decided to join the group for their next launch. And for anyone else (like me!) that has wanted to get involved in the community, it is never too late!

... **Lukas**

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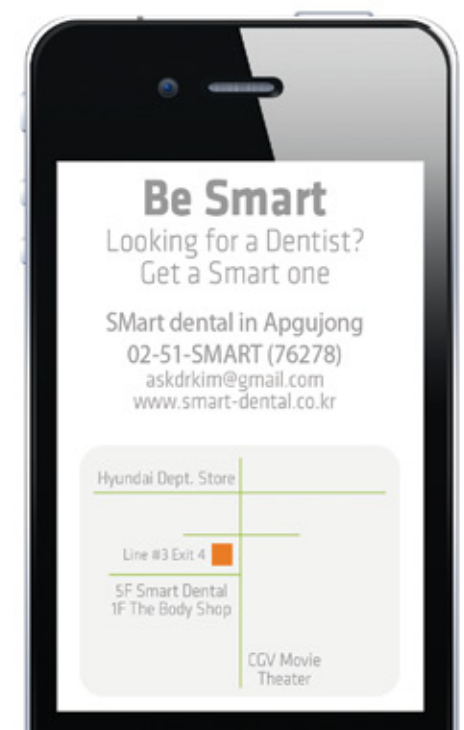
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# This month's EVENTS

April 1<sup>st</sup> - April 30<sup>th</sup>

## Event of the month

There are so many festivals in April that we could not choose just one. We suggest you go to as many as possible! Cherry blossoms are highlights.

PINK INDICATES A FESTIVAL

\*All the events published in this calendar are subject to unforeseen changes by the promoters. Groove Korea does NOT take responsibility for any misunderstandings or third party damage. The words here expressed do not represent those of Groove Korea.

✉ For suggestions or comments email Matthew Lamers: mattlamers@groovekorea.com

April

1

- Festival: Cherry Blossom Festival in Changwon, South Gyeongsang Province; April 1-10; <http://gunhang.changwon.go.kr>
- Language: Russian lessons for non-native speakers; 10,000 won; 2-4 p.m. every Sunday in Myeongdong; aruskor.org
- Food: Ongoing: Fish Market Tour, Vegan Taste Tour, Night Dining Tour; ongofood.com

April

3

- Food: Slider Night @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Tuesdays); 4 sliders for price of 3; (02) 333-1604
- Wine: Italian Stallions; Grand Hyatt Seoul Wine Club; 93,000 won; selrs-dine@hyatt.com
- Food: Learn about Korea's cuisine with O'ngo culinary tour of Seoul; ongofood.com

April

5

- Drink: Men's night @ Craftworks in Itaewon; 1,000 won off beer; <http://craftworkstaphouse.com>
- Networking: AMCHAM Human Resources Workshop in Gangnam; [www.amchamkorea.org](http://www.amchamkorea.org)
- Exhibit: Eva Hesse's Spectres and Studiowork @ Kukje Gallery; through April 7

April

7

- Music: Pg.Lost, No Respect for Beauty, Swimmingdol @ DGBD in Hongdae; <http://supercolorsuper.com>
- Festival: Jindo Miracle Sea Festival in Jindo, Jeollanam-do;
- Music: LMFAO @ Olympic Hall in Seoul

April

2

- Food: Wing Night @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Mondays); 400 won/wing; (02) 333-1604
- Beer: 15,000 won all-you-can-drink beer @ Beer Garden, Renaissance Hotel, Gangnam (every day, 6-9 p.m.); (02) 2222-8630

April

4

- Social: Quiz night @ Craftworks in Noksapyeong (Wednesdays)
- Exhibit: Design Finland @ Hangaram Art Museum; through April 14
- Festival: Gaya Culture Festival in Gimhae; history & culture; April 4-8; [www.gcfcokorea.com](http://www.gcfcokorea.com)

April

6

- Music: HBC Acoustic Winter Fest @ Phillies, Orange Tree, VFW; April 6, 7, 12, 13
- Music: No Brain @ Sangsang Madang in Hongdae; <http://www.sangsangmadang.com>
- Festival: Jeju Cherry Blossom Festival; April 6-8; @ Jeju Citizen Welfare Town

April

8

- Festival: Cherry Blossom Festival in Hwagae, Gyeongsangnam-do; <http://toureng.hadong.go.kr/main>
- Self-help: AA meeting @ Int'l Lutheran Church; 5 p.m.; meetings every Sunday
- Festival: Icheon Baeksa Sansuyu Blossom Festival; April 6-8

April

9

- Social: Open mic @ Tony's in Itaewon (Mondays); [tonysitaewon.com](http://tonysitaewon.com)
- Exhibit: Magical Realism in the Netherlands @ Museum of Art Seoul National University; through April 12
- Drinks: Happy hour @ Craftworks in Itaewon (weekdays) 4-6 p.m.; 2,000 won off beer and house wines

April

11

- Social: Standup comedy (Wednesdays) @ Tony's in Itaewon; [tonysitaewon.com](http://tonysitaewon.com)
- Music: Pictureplane @ Bubble Bar in Gwanju; <http://super-colorsuper.com>
- Exhibit: Sculpture By Other Means @ One and J. Gallery; through April 11

April

13

- Music: Lenny Kravitz in Seoul @ Jamsil Indoor Gymnasium
- Drink: Bucket night @ Beer O'Clock in Sinchon (Fridays); [beeroclock.ca](http://beeroclock.ca)
- Festival: Cherry Blossom Festival at Cheongpungho Lake, Chungcheongbuk-do; April 13-15; <http://english.okjc.net>

April

15

- Music: Kingston Rudieska in Seoul @ Mapo Art Center; <http://www.mapoartcenter.or.kr>
- Self-help: Overeaters Anonymous meeting @ the International Lutheran Church; 7:30 p.m.
- Festival: Strawberry Festival in Nonsan, Chungcheongnam-do; April 14-15; <http://nsfestival.co.kr>

April

17

- Tour: SIWA's Dongdaemun History and Culture Park & Design Plaza guided tour; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)
- Festival: Spring Flowers Festival at Yeouido, Seoul; April 13-17; [www.ydp.go.kr](http://www.ydp.go.kr)

April

19

- Music: Dream Theater @ Olympic Park in Seoul
- Fitness: Bugak-san hiking with SIWA; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)
- Food: Wing Night @ Hillside in Itaewon; 3,000 won; 070-4136-2208

April

21

- Exhibit: Papua Niujini Tribal Art @ Moran Museum of Art; through April 21
- Theatre: Seoul Shakespeare Company's The Tempest; April, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29; [info@seoulshakespeare.com](mailto:info@seoulshakespeare.com)
- Festival: Ceramic Festival in Yeosu; April 21-May 13; [www.yeojuceramic.com](http://www.yeojuceramic.com)

April

23

- Food: Wing night @ Craftworks in Itaewon; 12 wings for 6,000 won; <http://craftworkstaphouse.com>
- Culture: "Turkish Culture through Turkish Coffee and Tea" with SIWA; 1 p.m.; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)
- Festival: Canola Flower Festival on Jeju Island; April 22-29; <http://culture.jeju.go.kr>

April

25

- Food: Bottomless Fries Night with burger @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Wednesdays); (02) 333-1604
- Tour: Antique Market tour with Mr. Anthony Banks & SIWA; 10:45 a.m.; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)

April

27

- Music: Lady Gaga performs @ Jamsil Sports Complex Stadium, in Seoul
- Music: Galaxy Express, Pavlov in Hongdae @ Sangsang Madang; [www.sangsangmadang.com](http://www.sangsangmadang.com)
- Festival: Great Admiral Yi-Sun-Sin Festival, April 27-29; Asan, Chungcheongnam-do; [www.e-sunshin.com](http://www.e-sunshin.com)

April

29

- Festival: Hampyeong Butterfly Festival in Jeollanam-do; April 27-May 8; [www.hampyeong.jeonnam.kr](http://www.hampyeong.jeonnam.kr)
- Exhibit: Michael Craig-Martin's Word - Image - Desire @ Gallery Hyundai; through April 29

April

10

- Food: 2 for 1 fish & chips @ Woldhound (Tuesdays); [wolfhoundpub.com](http://wolfhoundpub.com)
- Lecture: Yeol Lecture, History of Seochon Area; [www.yeol.org](http://www.yeol.org)

April

12

- Music: HBC Acoustic Winter Fest @ Phillies, Orange Tree, VFW; April 6, 7, 12, 13
- Music: Pictureplane @ Urban in Daegu; <http://supercolorsuper.com>
- Tour: SIWA's Haengnam Chinaware factory tour; 8:30 a.m.; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)

April

14

- Fitness: Rock Climbing with Sanirang Alpine Networks @ Daeyami Station; [www.sanirang.net](http://www.sanirang.net)
- Ball: The Dutch Ball at Grand Hyatt Seoul
- Music: Pictureplane @ Bar Exit in Hongdae; [www.facebook.com/barexit](http://www.facebook.com/barexit)

April

16

- Food: Wing Night @ Big Rock in Gangnam; 5,000 won; (02) 539-6673
- Exhibit: Ernst Gamperl @ Gallery LVS; runs from April 5 to April 28
- Festival: Yeouido Spring Flower Festival; April 13-17 @ Yeouido National Assembly Building and the surrounding area

April

18

- Food: 2 for 1 Fish & Chips @ Big Rock in Gangnam; every Wednesday; (02) 539 6673
- Food: Cheese steak sandwich night @ Hollywood Grill in Itaewon; (02) 749-1659

April

20

- Tour: SIWA's Mangwol-sa temple tour guided by Professor David A. Mason; [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)
- Info: Open registration to volunteer through Itaewon Global Village Center; [global.seoul.go.kr/itaewon](http://global.seoul.go.kr/itaewon)

April

22

- Exhibit: 2012 Art T-shirts @ Namisum Swing Gallery, Chuncheon City; through April 29
- Self-help: Codependents Anonymous meeting @ the International Lutheran Church; 5 p.m.

April

24

- Food: Wing night @ 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon; go to 3alleypub.com for more information
- Exhibit: New York New Work @ Gallery 4walls in Hak-dong; April 6-May 12

April

26

- Festival: Jeonju International Film Festival; April 26-May 4; <http://eng.jiff.or.kr>
- Social: Quiz night @ 3 Alley Pub in Itaewon; win beer; 3alleypub.com
- Tour: Presidential Blue House tour with SIWA; 10 a.m.; register at [www.siwapage.com](http://www.siwapage.com)

April

28

- Music: Blackhole in Seoul @ Rolling Hall; <http://www.rollinghall.co.kr>
- Tour: Magnolia Excursion @ Mallipo Beach; [www.raskb.com](http://www.raskb.com)
- Drink: Vodka Night @ Yaletown in Sinchon (Saturdays); Bottle of Russian Vodka 39,000 won; (02) 333-1604

April

30

- Festival: Icheon Ceramic Festival; April 28-May 20; [www.ceramic.or.kr](http://www.ceramic.or.kr)
- Festival: Traditional Teapot Festival in Myungyeong City, Gyeongsangbuk-do; April 28- May 6





# KOREA

ALL STORIES TRANSLATED BY NATHAN SCHWARTZMAN AT WWW.KOREABEAT.COM AND EDITED BY GROOVE KOREA FOR LENGTH

## BRIEFS

### Foreign language high schools dominate SKY

Of the top 10 high schools for producing SKY students, only one is not a foreign language high school – Sangsan High School. SKY refers to the most elite universities in the country – Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University.

One in three SKY students came from a foreign language high school this year, continuing a long-standing trend. But the rate actually fell. After rising from 28.4 percent in 2009 to 32.2 percent in 2010 and 33.4 percent in 2011, the rate this year was 31.3 percent.

Experts say this is due to the expanding applicant pool and the CSAT becoming easier, reducing the merits of foreign-language high school graduates.

### Safety monitors at public schools to prevent violence

Last month the Seoul government announced that it will employ 1,110 school safety monitors in the city's 555 public elementary, middle and high schools in an attempt to prevent school violence.

There will be two safety monitors in each elementary school.

Ninety-three percent, or 1,036, of them have served in the same capacity in the past year.

Beginning this year, their salaries will increase 25 percent to 1.105 million won per month, with every other Saturday off.

"This system has been created with the cooperation of the schools to ensure safe schools and prevent violence," said an official with the city.

### Police, doctors accuse hospitalized student of smoking marijuana

A foreign student at Korea University had to be rushed to the hospital when he began having convulsions last month. According to Korea University Hospital and local police, the 18-year-old – an international student from Kazakhstan – had been smoking dope with two Russian friends in the dormitory.

Local media also reported that the man had been smoking marijuana, but testing revealed he had not been smoking drugs.

An official at the hospital said, "At first (the man) was unconscious and convulsing, then began to laugh and attempted to leave the bed ... we reported to police that he appeared to have used drugs. We thought he had smoked marijuana."

But police said urine testing showed that he was neither on marijuana nor a synthetic drug.

## 4 IN 10 SUFFER JOB INTERVIEW DISCRIMINATION BASED ON LOOKS

Four in 10 Koreans say they have suffered discrimination at job interviews on the basis of their looks, costing them either employment opportunities or lower salaries, a survey has found. The jobs website Career announced the results of its survey of 583 jobseekers, finding that 42.4 percent believe they have been the victims of discrimination based on their appearance in the process of seeking employment. Of those lost opportunities, 53.4 percent were "absolutely never being hired," 35.6 percent were "being evaluated by my appearance more than my education, grades, or talents," and 25.5 percent were "being discriminated against compared to other applicants." Twenty percent said, "I have been told rude statements about my appearance," and 16.2 percent said, "I have been asked questions related to my appearance."

Fifty-six percent said they had "just put up with it." However, 31.2 percent said they "didn't join the company despite being accepted"; 7.3 percent "lost weight or had plastic surgery" because of the ordeal, and only 4 percent "complained strongly to the interviewer."

Eighty-five percent of all respondents said that one's appearance affects one's job search. Fifty percent believe how a job candidate looks has a "significant" influence, while 29.4 percent said it was "very significant." Twenty percent said he was neither significant nor insignificant, 1 percent said it was of "low significance," and no one said it was "very insignificant."

## PAJU ENGLISH VILLAGE WEIGHS PRIVATIZATION

At the same time as its privatization is being debated, Paju English Village in Gyeonggi Province is starting to accept more foreign students to improve its bottom line.

Last month, the Gyeonggi Provincial Council and the English Village announced that the Paju English Village, brought in 72 foreign students in 2009, 192 in 2010, and 613 last year. It began international marketing three years ago. This year it has plans to seek over 1,500 foreign students from Japan, Russia, China, Thailand and other countries.

Park Won-jun, head of the Paju English Village, announced that, "the increasing number of Japanese students who come to Korea on school trips because of the Korean Wave, and others, love our program for foreign students ... we are expanding our sister school relations between middle and high schools in Gyeonggi Province and in other countries, and creating exchange programs between teachers and university students."

"We plan to create a 'two-headed rabbit' that raises our revenue and our contribution to the public good," added Park. Foreign students pay up to 500,000 won for a three-night, four-day stay.

Paju English Village has increased its rate of fiscal self-reliance to 81 percent (1.9 billion won) – its highest level ever. Presumably the government covers the rest of its costs.

The Paju English Village's privatization remains a hot topic. "We believe that privatization would improve the program and its services, improve its finances, and serve the public through free education," said an education official with the province.

Last month the Provincial Council passed a privatization bill. Gyeonggi Provincial Council Rep. Lee Sang-seong of the Unified Progressive Party said that "to bring it out of the red, the Paju English Village's operations may be privatized and if so, the focus would be on profit rather than the public good ... even if its finances improve, it needs to remain a public institution dedicated to helping poor and multicultural children." The Paju English Village was changed into a foundation in 2006 with an endowment of 99 billion won.

## CHINA BERATED OVER FORCED REPATRIATIONS

South Korean anger is growing over China's forced repatriation of North Korean defectors back to their communist homeland. Real Korea, an Internet news association of university students, held a rally in front of the Chinese Embassy in Hyoja-dong, Seoul, protesting that country's forcible repatriation of North Korean refugees. "The Chinese government must recognize North Koreans' status as refugees and send them to South Korea, which is obviously the refugees' hope," said one student. "As a G2 country, the Chinese government must protect human rights and the universal value of human life."

Twenty-six-year-old Kim Han-mok, a senior at Yeungnam University and Real Korea's chief editor, and 27-year-old Yang Jun-mo, a senior at Howon University and a spokesman for the group, shaved their heads in public as part of the protest. "Our hair will grow back, but the North Koreans can never come back," said Yang. "North Korean refugees should be sent to third-party countries." In another protest, members of the Korea Parent Federation marched to the Chinese embassy and burned effigies of Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un. In Japan, two organizations related to North Korea held protests at the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo. "The Chinese government must cease repatriating North Korean refugees and send to them to South Korea or a third-party country they choose," said one man. The Japanese government issued a statement saying, "We call on repatriations from China to cease in accordance with international human rights agreements." An organization of South Korean citizens in Japan is considering plans to protest at the Chinese embassy.

# BEAT

AND CLARITY. THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED HERE DO NOT REPRESENT THOSE OF GROOVE KOREA. — ED.

## KOREAN PUBLIC SENTIMENT ON CHINA TURNS FOR THE WORST

While China has been forcefully repatriating North Korean defectors to their repressive homeland for decades with little outrage from South Korean mainstream media and politicians, this year the issue has been thrust to the front of the national discourse.

Defectors face imprisonment, torture and, in some cases, the death penalty after being repatriated to the North. Ahn Cheol-soo, an influential professor and businessman whose political aspirations remain up in the air, has gotten quietly involved, demonstrating how mainstream sentiment against China is turning for the worst.

Last month, Professor Ahn visited a candlelight vigil being held to protest the repatriation of North Korean refugees, causing a lot of discussion on Twitter. A few days later, following the forming of the Ahn Cheol-soo Foundation, Prof. Ahn met with Lee Ae-ran, the first female North Korea refugee to earn a Ph. D. He declined to comment on anything other than the candlelight vigil.

On Twitter there were conflicting opinions, with some supporting Prof. Ahn and others seeing his actions as politically motivated. One user wrote, "Prof. Ahn's visit to the vigil against repatriating the refugees is excellent. It is good he holds appropriate positions." Others saw Prof. Ahn's visit as a political act. Another user tweeted, "It appears to be just political, since he had no good reason for it."

Another user tweeted "So Ahn Cheol-soo participated in candlelight vigil against China repatriating North Korean refugees ... isn't he just slimily taking advantage of it politically?"

Ahn received a letter of thanks from Dr. Lee ahead of his participation in the vigil.

## GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR DISABLED STUDENTS GROWS

Since the passage of the Law on Special Education for the Disabled in 2008, the number of students receiving special education has increased 25 percent, a study has found.

With the number of people legally recognized as disabled increasing, the public consensus is shifting toward assisting all disabled people attain an education.

Statistics published by the Korea National Institute for Special Education show that in 2011, of the school-age population of 8.55 million , 0.97 percent, or 82,665, received special education due to a disability. That represents an increase of 25.4 percent, or 16,725 more students that received special education in 2007.

The figures were 71,484 in 2008, 75,187 in 2009, and 79,711 in 2010.

There were eight categories of legal disabilities – visual, aural, emotional, learning, language, health, mental and physical – in 2007 and three more were added since the passage of the law in 2008.

The age range for mandatory educational support was expanded in 2009 from elementary and middle school to include all students from age 5 through high school. It was expanded again in 2011, and will be expand again this year to include those as young as 3 years old.

Last year, 155 schools offered special education for disabled students in 12,257 classes, and the number of disabled children receiving dependency allowances increased by 23.8 percent. Of the 2,375 institutions for the disabled, 37 percent, or 879, offer a total of 3,812 regular education programs for the disabled.

## 'BLACK SPIDER' SNATCHING WOMEN'S SMARTPHONES

In the middle of a warm afternoon early last month, a woman who asked to only go by Kim was standing at a bus stop near Seoul National University in Dongdaemun, Seoul. A young man on a black motorcycle stopped and asked to borrow her cellphone. The man said, "My phone's battery is dead. Can I borrow yours?" Kim, oblivious to the fact that the man was a thief, handed him her smartphone and the man promptly sped away with it.

In fact, this has happened numerous times over the last couple months in the Gangbuk area of Seoul. Local media have dubbed the smartphone snatcher "The Black Spider."

Appearing to be a young, muscular man, the thief is always dressed in an all-black training outfit and wearing a black helmet. His motorcycle – also black – is equipped with a 125cc engine. Police and media call him The Black Spider because they say his outfit resembles that of one of the villains of the movie "Spiderman 3." Police blame The Black Spider for committing five crimes, all in Jongro-gu, Seongbuk-gu, Dongdaemun-gu and Jung-gu. Four of them were committed within seven days. He targets women with expensive smartphones in broad daylight. The dark tinting of his helmet prevents them from getting a good look at his face.

The Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency put out an alert for officers in Hyehwa, Dongdaemun, Jungbuk, and Seongbuk to watch out for men wearing black clothes, driving motorcycles and snatching smartphones from unsuspecting women. Police are also investigating similar crimes in Gyeonggi Province that are similar to those committed by The Black Spider.

"The only clues we have are that he sometimes claims to be a deliveryman and always wears black clothes," said a spokesperson for the Seoul police.

## BRIEFS

### Foreign wives fall prey to loan sharks after divorce

Media reports are increasing in frequency over recently-divorced foreign wives falling prey to loan sharks.

The unscrupulous lenders are targeting divorced women who don't have enough money to attain Korean citizenship.

Throughout neighborhoods in Seoul with high concentrations of foreigners, businesses are taking advantage of people in need of having 30 million won in one's bank account to acquire Korean citizenship. Law firms and travel agencies are playing the role of loan shark, it has been reported.

In one case, a foreign woman took out a 30 million won loan in order to qualify to take the Korean citizenship test. She was charged an annual rate of 365 percent.

### North Korean defectors get first hospital visits

A professor/philanthropist paid for about 20 North Korean defectors to have their first-ever medical checkups at a hospital last month. That brings the number of defectors he's helped to 600, local media reported.

"Compared to South Korean hospitals, North Korean hospitals are really quite shabby," said one person.

The 20 people were treated at Korea University Anam Hospital in Seoul. One defector, 66-year-old Mrs. Choi, who came to South Korea in 2006, said she made 1.5 million per month cleaning apartments in China and sent most of that to her family back in North Korea. "Going to a hospital was something I couldn't even dream of doing," she said.

Forty-year-old Mr. Kim, who arrived in South Korea with his 2-year-old daughter last July, said that, "I would be so happy if I could bring my parents in North Korea to a hospital."

The Korea University professor who covered their medical expenses requested anonymity. The professor has been paying for defectors' checkups since October of 2008. Ten to 20 do so every month at a cost of 200,000 won each, meaning the professor has donated about 120 million won.

Many of the defectors who received checkups in the past have needed follow-up exams, at a cost of about 40,000 won per person.

"North Korean refugees are impoverished and for South Korea it is difficult to establish new medical benefit programs. I will continue to donate money until reunification is achieved," said the professor.





# KOREA'S STRESSED MASSES

Story and Photography by Luc Forsyth

➤ There is a tendency among some expats in Korea to align themselves along an us-versus-them axis. That is to say that some members of the foreign community feel that they are “normal” people living in a strange and illogical society. Expats often don’t understand why Koreans are the way they are here, and a lot of the time they don’t really want to find out.

I’m no expert on the intricacies of Korean society, but I feel that when living in someone else’s country there is a responsibility to take the time to answer these sorts of questions, rather than to simply dismiss an entire culture as being nonsensical or weird. So I started asking questions and conducting interviews – sometimes with friends, sometimes with co-workers, and sometimes with people I barely know – to try and get a more personal insight into what makes this society tick.

The first such issue is pressure. Korea is notorious for being one of the most fast-paced, stressful and high-pressure environments on the planet and I want to know what that means for average citizens.

Over the course of more than 20 interviews, answers are sought for basic questions: Where does the pressure come from? How does it affect people’s lives? Is there a solution?

Those interviewed are of varied backgrounds. They have different jobs, they are different ages, and they – for the most part – don’t know each other. Hopefully some common themes emerge to fill the gaps for those who would have otherwise shaken their heads and muttered “crazy Koreans.” Following are six interviews.

None of the people interviewed speak English as a first language. They are of varying English proficiency levels from beginner to very advanced and in some cases translation was needed. To improve readability and cohesiveness, some grammatical edits have been made where necessary. In no way has meaning or context been altered.

Editor's note: The opinions expressed here do not represent those of Groove Korea. To comment, e-mail [opinion@groovekorea.com](mailto:opinion@groovekorea.com).

Luc Forsyth is an Asia-based photojournalist. To see more of his work go to [www.lucforsyth.com](http://www.lucforsyth.com) or follow him on twitter @LucForsyth.

“Now we know the real value of Koreans. Korean people now know how to win – it is bali bali. This is very useful for industry, but it is bad for the soul.”

San Byun-ho



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## San Byun-ho

55, industrialist

### What causes pressure in Korean society?

First of all, most Koreans tend to be very hurried. I guess it's our new culture. When my parents were young, they didn't hurry in the same way. After the Korean War, the Korean situation was the worst in the world; we were one of the poorest countries, like the Congo or somewhere like that. The country was devastated. A lot of people died. Our parents educated us that we should work very hard and study very hard, otherwise we would not survive. There was no food and nothing to drink. For survival (during the war years) they had to really hurry. They worked very hard, but at that time they were already adults.

When the Japanese occupied Korea, there was no need to hurry up because there was no reason – they couldn't make money anyway. There was a dictatorship, so even if they hurried, they could not gain any extra money.

It was the children of wartime who were the first to really experience the bali bali culture. There was no food and we could only eat once or twice per day. The Americans gave us a lot of low-grade corn and during my elementary school days we used to eat a lot of cornmeal. There was little food, so this was very delicious. There was no rice, no bread.

I have an impressive memory of that time. Whenever we came home from school, we had to work with our parents on the farms using oxen and raising chickens and pigs. During the daytime we had to work very hard and at night we had to study. At that time I had to study a lot. But we had no electricity so we had to study using lanterns. When I would wake up the next morning and look in the mirror, I would have a black nose from the fumes. This was not a very long time ago.

When I was 10, electricity was provided to the countryside. The people were very surprised; it was very bright. It looked like we were liberated from the black world. We had serious hardships during our childhood days, so I could understand the value of electricity. The young generation had to work and overcome a lot of obstacles.

The famous dictator (Park Chung Hee) did many things for Korea. He ruled by dictatorship, but he could not help it. It was a very dangerous situation; if Korea had tried democracy, they would have been bankrupt – like the Philippines. Previously the Philippines had been very rich, much richer than Korea. Park Chung Hee made his best effort to improve our quality of life and came up with a lot of ideas to develop and improve our country. He made a policy of rural revolution and spread a “can do” attitude. So people were continuously told “We can do it.” They broadcast it over the radio: “If we cooperate together, we can do it. If we are to be successful, we have to hurry up.” There was not enough time for anyone, including me. Because of this new attitude, Korean people could reach our current status as a developed country.

So my generation all worked together under this attitude. Now I have two daughters, and I had to educate them in the same way; even 10 years ago Korea was still developing. Also, Korean mothers are special. They are very diligent and they focus all their energy on the education of their children. I think this is the same as mothers from other places, but Korean mothers are much more aggressive.

So this bali bali culture made our country what it is.

When I started my business, I didn't think there was any chance to overcome Japanese technology. When I was 35 I had a chance to go to Tokyo; I wanted to import antistatic products. While there, I visited a Japanese company. It was my first visit and I was very curious about Japan. When I arrived at the airport I was very surprised. At that time there were not many cars in Korea, but in Tokyo I could see so many luxury cars. I couldn't imagine how Korea could catch up. I was humbled.

Now 20 years have passed. Samsung started by importing technology for black-and-white TVs from Japan. They started to make superconductors, which analysts at the time said was crazy. For seven years they had a deficit. We never could have imagined that Samsung would become what it is today. It is because of the bali bali attitude. Samsung works twice as much as their competitors like Sony and General Electric. By working hard and by continuous imitation, the level of technology is now equal to international companies, and in some cases it's better. Thinking of when I was a young man in Japan, I could not believe that I would see a Korean company overcome a Japanese company. But right now it is reality.

And this is happening across many industries. Pohang Steel is a top company and our shipbuilding is the best. One by one we are becoming No. 1 in the world. It is the same “can do” attitude that was repressed by the Japanese for 36 years – no rights, no culture. Now we know the real value of Koreans. Korean people now know how to win – it is bali bali. This is very useful for industry, but it is bad for the soul.

### What personal stress do you experience?

My 30s were the most stressful time of my life. I started a business and I had no leverage or money. I had to survive by myself; there was no one to help me. When I established my company, I rented a very small office and employed a young girl. I borrowed 2 million won (\$1,970 in today's conversion) from a friend. I had to find more clients so I was working day and night.

There were many bad situations that I had to face. I could have taken a job at a big company, but I had made up my mind to become a businessman. Sometimes when I met my friends who worked for companies like Samsung and LG I envied them and wondered why I chose to start a small business instead. But I had made a decision and I couldn't give up. When I started my business I didn't think about how stressful Korea was. But once I got into it, I realized how difficult it was.

Out of my friends, fewer than 5 percent tried to start a business; the rest went to work for companies where they tried to advance. To advance they had to compete against many people and the competition was very intense. The work culture is still like this.

In the future I expect this culture to change a little bit. People want to enjoy their lives and be with their families.

### What is the solution?

I am very accustomed to the bali bali system. I know that it isn't good for the soul, and if we want to have a stable life we need to control this high speed. Right now I am trying to slow down gradually. At first it was very hard to calm down, so I needed to practice how to stabilize my mind. But after I came to peace in my soul, I felt much happier than before.

I have a very unique solution to the problem and it has made me very happy. I go to bookstores once a month and I read. Recently I have read many books on how to relax my soul. There are many methods. We need to learn more from Buddhism – especially the Buddhism from India. By reading these books I have come to a final conclusion and created a solution for myself. It took five years.

When I get up in the morning I think by myself for 20 to 30 minutes. I think about things that are good, better and positive. Nothing negative. I have visions of hope, not sadness. Then my mind naturally calms down and I have dreams. I write them down five times and read them five times. After that I go to work. I am ready. This is the secret to my success.

*“Now, the pressure comes from the money I need to get married — about \$100, 000. Men are supposed to buy a house and women are supposed to furnish it. There is no way I can make that amount of money considering what I'm doing now.”*

Hwang In-gi

## Hwang In-gi

31, Ph. D candidate

### What causes pressure in Korean society?

Making money is the biggest problem. Compared to the money we spend, the money we make is not that much.

In Australia, even old people can get a job easily. Wal-Mart is a good example. They hire old people; some of them are even in wheelchairs. In Korea that never happens. Once you get old, once your physical abilities fade, you will not be able to make any more money. It means that you will be abandoned by society.

We need some kind of social system. I mean, in Australia, as long as you have the will to keep working, the company is not able to fire you, unless you are a very naughty worker. But here, the CEO, or whoever owns the company, has the right to fire you anytime they want. They do this because they don't want to pay you anymore. Let's say this: With the amount of money they pay one manager, they can hire four new young people.

We are living in a world where the need to change and adapt to new environments is very important, and they don't think old people can really do that.

### What causes pressure for you personally?

As soon as I get married and have a child I will feel like my dad. We will have to spend almost \$800,000 – that is the amount of money we need to raise a kid in Korea. It is considered normal to pay for our children's tuition, even in university, and that is what my mom did. So she covered me until I got my bachelor's degree.

Now, the pressure comes from the money I need to get married – about \$100, 000. Men are supposed to buy a house and women are supposed to furnish it. There is no way I can make that amount of money considering what I'm doing now. I'm a student and I'm making a very small amount of money at my job. I want to get married (soon), which is not really possible financially. Mentally and physically I'm ready, but finance is the big problem.

### Is there a solution? When does the pressure stop?

When we are in the tiny place called the grave. The consumption of liquor is very high in Korea. That is why most office workers drink a lot. That is the typical way Korean people escape. Temporarily.

A real solution will only come with time. We need a change in our system. We need to collect more taxes from rich people, but the government is doing the opposite. Actually the government has been reducing taxes for rich people so that they can spend more money, and they believe that is the only way to revive the dying economy. But once they start gathering more taxes, people will not like it. I would be willing to pay more taxes if the government could come up with a good plan.



*"People's attitudes must change about the disabled. Many people in Korea suppose that a disabled man does not have any abilities, but the disabled are the same (as other people)."*

Suh Kwang-ho

## Suh Kwang-ho

37, Web programmer

### What causes pressure in Korean society?

Korea's president, Lee Myung-bak (is the cause of pressure) in Korea. People hate him – not all people, but most people hate him. He tries to control both the press and society. People are not free, and they cannot talk freely. He will also try to control social networks in the future. By controlling Yeoido (the broadcasting center of Seoul), he can control society.

### What kind of personal pressure do you feel?

I am a disabled man (Cerebral Palsy). Public transport is extremely difficult for me in Korea; there are not many buses for the disabled. Three years ago I went to St. Louis, Missouri, to visit my sister. There I could take a bus very easily, and the bus driver was very kind. But in Korea, taking a bus is not easy, and the drivers are not kind. When the buses are very crowded it is the worst. When they are not crowded, people can be kind, but Korean people live a bali bali lifestyle. When I ride a bus, it takes a long time for me to get on and off. People get annoyed very quickly. It is stressful for me to move around. People's attitudes must change about the disabled. Many people in Korea suppose that a disabled man does not have any abilities, but the disabled are the same (as other people). I may not be very smart, but I have been writing magazine articles in Korean for the last two years. I also want to be a good writer in English, but it is difficult.

It is also difficult for a disabled man to get a job. After I graduated from university, I didn't get a job for a long time, maybe one or two years. People see a disabled person and they think he isn't able. They only see my body, not my brain. They also think that I cannot communicate with other people. I finally got a job in 2000 by sending my resume to online sites. Even now that I have a lot of experience, getting a job is not so easy. This is the situation.

### What is your solution?

It's a difficult question. Maybe I can go abroad. It might be possible to have a normal life in Korea someday, but not yet. Maybe when this government is gone.

Things are a little better than before, when I first came to Seoul (in 1999). At that time, when I crossed the street people looked at me very strangely. They looked at me like I was a museum piece. Now it is better, though.

If possible, I would like to live abroad – maybe the United States or Canada. The cold is no problem, I just hate hot weather. I But I heard that the Internet isn't very fast there. If that's true I will hate it. I want to have a normal life. In the future I want to be a better writer.

*"I want to find a job that I really enjoy. I don't really care about the money, but society doesn't really want me to be like that. So my job is for society, not for me – and I think that's not fair."*

Park Eun-ah

## Park Eun-ah

18, recent high school graduate

### Where does pressure come from in Korea?

When I was little, I didn't have to study that much; now they are studying in elementary school so that they can go to a good middle school or a foreign school. You know, they are little students, little boys and girls who want to play, but they are studying at home and at academies instead.

Korean people always ask what university you graduated from. It is like a status symbol. That's why parents always want their kids to go to a good university, so that they can get good paying jobs.

I want to find a job that I really enjoy. I don't really care about the money, but society doesn't really want me to be like that. So my job is for society, not for me – and I think that's not fair.

### What pressure do you feel personally?

If you care about your future there is a lot of pressure. Parents and teachers just say study, study, study. You have to do this, this, and this to get good (exam) scores and go to a good school. It's just about scores, not abilities.

But even if you have one of the top grades, you might not get into a good university, because the average could be 97 percent, meaning that students would have to get 100 percent (to be competitive). That's why people commit suicide. They study really hard, and then if they (botch) the exam, they get depressed.

I don't really want people to feel pressure, but they have to. That's Korea's way, so I cannot do anything about it. It will never change. But Korean women are not having children, so maybe in 40 or 50 years there will be fewer children in university and it will be easier.

### What is the solution? When will the pressure stop?

It will never stop. Never! Because after university I have to find a job and I have to get married. If there is a person who I really want to marry, I have to think about his status. Love doesn't matter. I really want to marry somebody who I love; I don't really care about his status, but my parents will care. They think I can live a better life with a husband who can earn a lot of money. I don't want people to stress about their status, but I don't think it's possible.

I lived in New Zealand for two years so I know it's completely different to Korea. They play outside and do sports, but in Korea we don't really have much time for sports. In New Zealand, people just stay outside all the time and relax. But even if I was born in New Zealand I would still feel pressure. There is nothing to do there. At night everything is closed after 10, so I have to go to sleep.

I want to stay in Korea, because I am Korean. In Korea life is very fast, and I always do things very fast. That's a good thing.





## Cho Jun-ho

33, IT specialist

### Where does pressure come from in Korea?

At my age, most people are interested in marriage and their jobs aren't very stable. My friend's hair is falling out because he has so much stress at his office. He has to work day and night. At the same time he wants to have a relationship, but it is very difficult because he has no time. When he finishes work he goes home and his parents ask him why he doesn't have a girlfriend or a wife. So he has stress at work and at home – there is no place where he has no stress in his adult life. I think it is the same for most people in Korea who are my age.

### What personal pressure do you feel?

I have stress, but I just talk with my wife and God, and it makes me comfortable. But without religion I cannot control myself. I get very angry and I want to fight someone.

The Korean traditional personality is very bali bali which means they need to get results as soon as possible. Not all, but most Korean people are like this. They never relax. They have no empty space in their minds. They do not think about anything other than their stress and what they have to do. Some Koreans have hobbies, but most do not. The most important things to them are just working, earning money and meeting a partner. Compare this to life in the United States, where there is a lot of nature and people can hang out outside or have a barbecue with friends. In Seoul it is impossible. People just drink soju. It is the only thing that young people can do with each other, and it's the only thing they can really do to get rid of stress. (But) this cannot be the solution to stress.

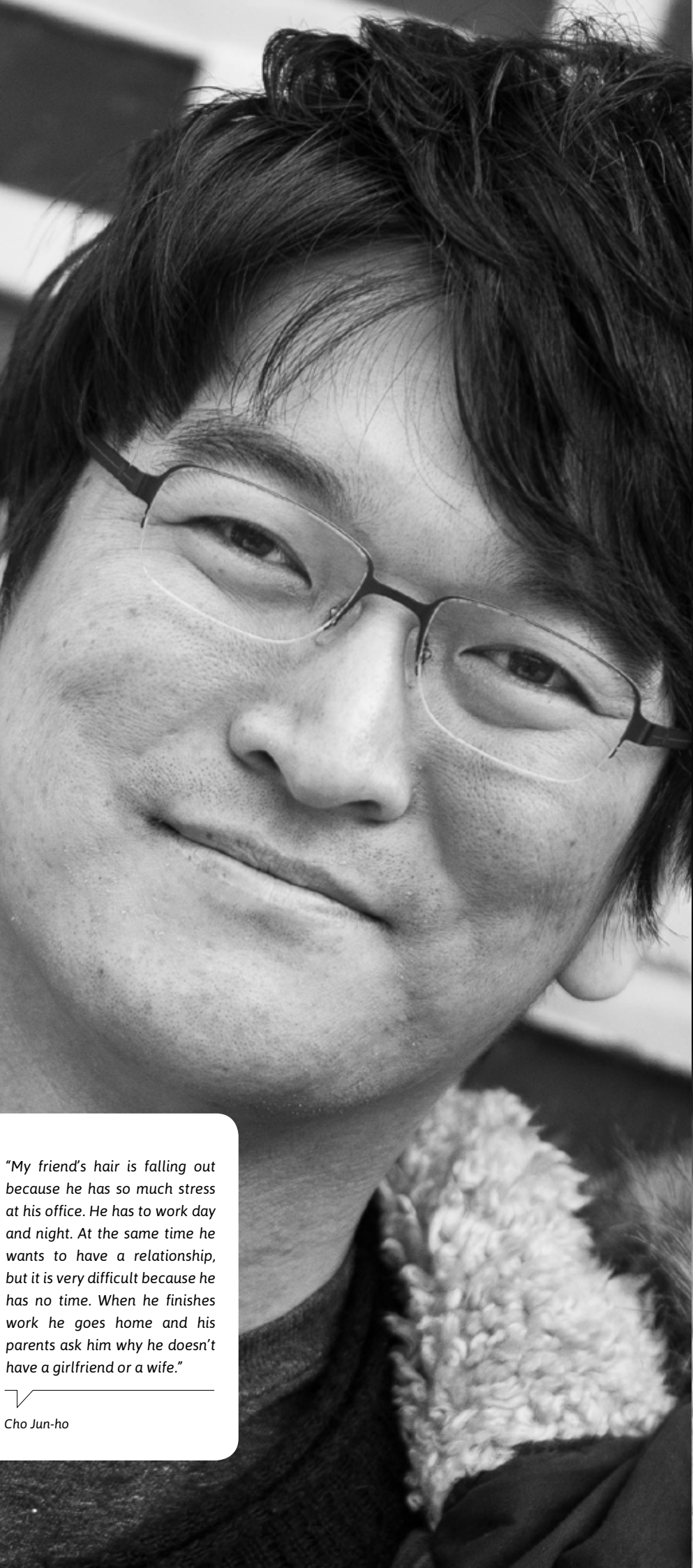
After the Korean War, people were very poor. The president made a plan for Korea, telling people they had to work hard to succeed in raising their social status. That mindset has not changed much these days, even though we are not starving anymore. It makes people think the most important thing in their lives is earning money.

This is changing now because of the Internet. People know that there are many beautiful places in the world where they can go. They also know what people do around the world and it makes them want to do the same things. (Korea's) national personality is changing.

### Is there a solution?

Most people just want others to think that they are doing very well. They change their status on a social network and when someone else hits the "like" button they are very satisfied. But I think these social networks will bring new stress. People use Facebook every day, but if it goes away these people will get very confused, like they lost their baby. It's the same with cell phones. Koreans use their cell phones for everything. But if it is gone for just one day, they are very sad.

When I have kids I want to show them nature. I want to show them more beautiful things.



*"My friend's hair is falling out because he has so much stress at his office. He has to work day and night. At the same time he wants to have a relationship, but it is very difficult because he has no time. When he finishes work he goes home and his parents ask him why he doesn't have a girlfriend or a wife."*

Cho Jun-ho



*"If a woman needs to take maternity leave, it's not really allowed. If you leave to take care of your child, it's really hard to get a job afterwards. As a future mom, just thinking about it is really hard."*

Oh Jae-kyung

## Oh Jae-kyung

30, International Education Consultant

### Where does pressure come from in Korea?

I think Korean society has become very stratified in a way. Economic mobility is getting harder and harder, and conflict between the classes – high-income and low-income earners – is getting very intense.

In the '70s and '80s, the majority of people in Korea were not rich. Everyone worked hard so they could get a better job, but 20 or 30 years down the road, that upward mobility has pretty much ground to a halt. Before, when everyone was poor, it was easier to get a better job and to get better pay by having a good education. But nowadays poor people cannot get as good an education as rich people. That is a problem in Korea.

### What about personal pressure?

I think most of my stress comes from being a woman. In Korea there is not much governmental support; we are not really protected in society. When people marry these days, both the husband and wife have to work to manage (financially). If a woman needs to take maternity leave, it's not really allowed. If you leave to take care of your child, it's really hard to get a job afterwards. As a future mom, just thinking about it is really hard. In Korea they are not really supportive at all – maternity leave is only three months.

### What is your solution?

I hope the government makes more detailed laws supporting women in the workplace, especially relating to maternity leave. But when I look at the current government, I don't really have hope. I try to like our president, and I don't really want to be angry with him – it's just that I don't really see how he is going to help us.

If I have enough money I would probably send my kids overseas (for schooling). I can't imagine them growing up in Seoul in a very high-pressure society, trying to be at the top and having to compete with everyone. They won't get to enjoy their lives. Koreans don't even really enjoy their hobbies. They don't really know what to do because they've never been encouraged to do something they like. They've just been encouraged to do what the majority of society thinks is good. If people think taking photos is cool, then everyone buys a camera. Or if they think golf is a luxury sport, they try to play golf all the time just to show they're rich. Hobbies are not really hobbies in Korea; they are just to show your class.

The main reason I chose to leave the United States and come back to Korea was because I hit a glass ceiling being a minority there. There was a limit to my opportunity. Americans are not really racist or anything, there is not really discrimination, but if you try to move up at a job it is hard for minorities. At least in Korea I can work hard and move up. The door to move between classes is getting narrower than before, but still it's possible (to pass through it). I guess that's why Korean people work hard and diligently – to get better and better.

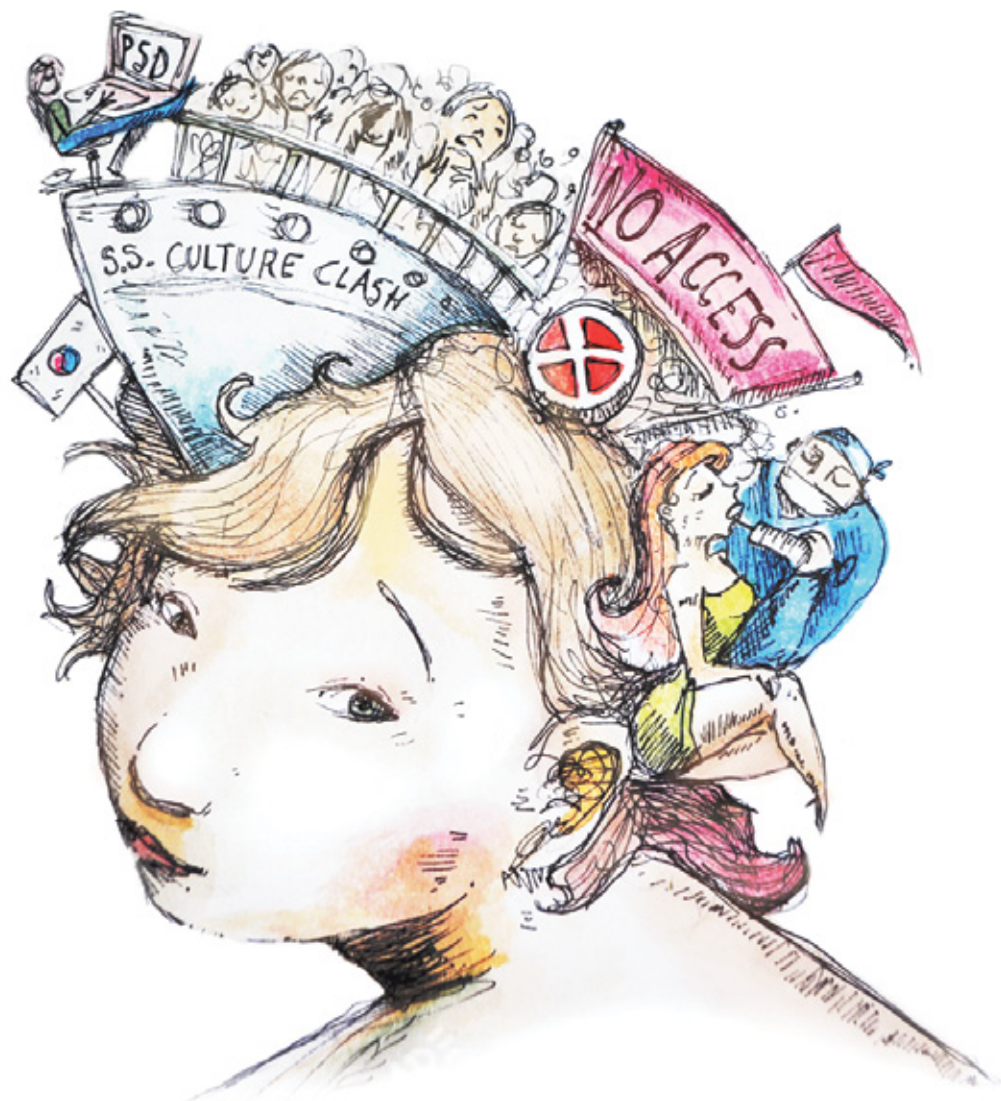


# Korean vs. North Korean: When the Western media gets it wrong

By David Croft

Illustration by Adela Ordoñez

➤ Around the time of Kim Jong-il's death (and Kim Jong-un's succession), there was a flood of articles on North Korea that couldn't help but poke fun at the country and its regime. It was obvious that people – journalists included – often did not understand the difference between that which is Korean and that which is North Korean.



**Given Kim Jong-il's obvious importance in their lives — good and bad — isn't it entirely conceivable to think that they would have a strong emotional reaction to his death?**

## 1. Fake crying

Probably the most popular image from this time was that of throngs of people theatrically wailing in unison. How could this possibly be real? People don't actually cry like that, and especially not huge masses of them. That's just not realistic. Except that in Korea it is exactly like that. A school nurse I used to work with once remarked about how Western people did not get sad at funerals. I protested and thought there must be some misunderstanding until I realized how Koreans tend to behave at funerals, which is exactly what you would imagine if you were familiar with Korean dramas. It's a loud, hysterical wailing, a perfectly melodramatic display of grief. No wonder our severe, understated grief would not come off as sad to them (maybe it's also the reason my Korean mother-in-law didn't at first believe that I was in love with her daughter; I wasn't making it obvious enough).

I suppose that a way of justifying the crying as fakery would be to reason that surely they could not feel anything towards such a brutal dictator. After all, he was not as admired as his father. However, given his obvious importance in their lives – good or bad – isn't it entirely conceivable to think that they would have a strong emotional reaction to his death?



## 2. Plastic surgery

The rumor du jour is that in a desperate bid to better secure his ascension to the North Korean throne, Kim Jong-un actually had multiple plastic surgeries to resemble his late grandfather, the beloved Kim Il Sung. Oh the horrors of being so desperate to gain acceptance that you would surgically alter your appearance!

The thing is, I am not sure that people in South Korea would think this an extreme thing to do. In her book on North Korean refugees, "Nothing to Envy," Barbara Demick called having plastic surgery "the ultimate South Korean experience." In fact, the data backs this up. South Koreans, per capita, have the highest rates of plastic surgery in the world.

You will never be so inundated with plastic surgery advertisements as you are in South Korea. Go to a Korean newspaper's website, or walk around a subway station in Seoul to see how commonplace it is.

## 3. Photoshop mania

At the funeral procession of Kim Jong-il, there were multiple articles about how North Korean propaganda had manipulated unsightly things, such as tire tracks, and other details. One article referred to it as "deceit," as if Joseph Goebbels was behind this trickery. Well, appearances are very important to Koreans, and so Photoshop is an everyday fact of life here. At my previous school, the sad appearance of our school did not prevent Photoshop wizards from turning it into a utopia for promotional materials. Our dirt sports field became grassy, complete with a pond. The parking lot disappeared. And the small modern addition to the front became the entire building. It's a given that if you go to a photographer here in South Korea, your appearance will be airbrushed to get rid of imperfections (and they will probably also lighten your skin while they're at it).

## 4. Refused access to non-sanctioned areas

According to Michael Breen's book, "The Koreans," while trying to assess the damage done to the Busan area during the Korean War, Western forces were mystified by how the Koreans would not let them see the worst areas of the city. How could the Western forces hope to properly help these people if they couldn't evaluate their suffering? It seemed that showing outsiders their worst parts amounted to a loss of face. Similar frustrations are still felt today in North Korea when humanitarian agencies, hoping to secure relief aid, are stymied by the North Korean government from seeing the most affected areas. This is often attributed to typical obtrusive North Korean behavior, when in fact it could be seen as a Korean way of doing things.

## 5. Cruise ship from hell

As part of an effort to modernize and bring hard currency into the country, North Korea has gotten into the cruise ship industry and recently brought along journalists to cover the maiden voyage. As documented in a lighthearted piece in the New York Times, it did not run very smoothly, and the captain even managed to crash the old ship into the dock on their return trip. While the humorous tone of the piece can be justified, some of what was mocked was also distinctly Korean. When the guests helped themselves to their meals out of "self-serve communal bowls," it was seen as a failure of hospitality. Yet while recently waiting for my subway in Seoul, I saw the same concept in a video ad for a South Korean cruise ship.

The same goes for how they expected people to sleep grouped together on mats on the floor, which was again poked fun at. Yet when going to the Korean version of cottages or resorts (called pensions in the South), I have found there to be little in the way of furnishings at some places, and most people are more than willing to share the floor with everyone else. ☹

The opinions expressed here are the author's and do not represent those of Groove Korea. To comment, e-mail [opinion@groovekorea.com](mailto:opinion@groovekorea.com). – Ed.



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# Making cents of foreign exchange

Where do you get a better rate, at a bank or airport?

By Michelle Farnsworth

Illustration by Adela Ordoñez



Dear Michelle,

The big blue digital display hanging in the bank that shows exchange rates is confusing. How do I know which rate to look at when I'm exchanging money?

—Mystified by Exchange Rates

➤ The first thing to consider is which foreign currency you want to exchange. Available currencies are listed in the first column of that exchange rate board. Please note that your bank may also offer additional currencies that are not posted. Ask your teller if you don't see your currency listed.

Remember, at most banks in Korea, your currency exchange

will always involve Korean won. You cannot, for example, change U.S. dollars directly into euros; you would have to first change your dollars into Korean won and then finally into euros.

The next factor to consider is whether you are exchanging cash or wiring money. The exchange rate board will have two main categories – “Cash” and “T/T”.



C O L U M N S

Dear Michelle: Banking Advice for Expats

*“You will always get a better rate when you exchange cash at a bank branch than at an airport exchange window.”*

T/T stands for Telegraphic Transfer, but may also be referred to as a wire transfer or an overseas remittance.

The T/T rates are always better than the cash rates, although there are fees involved in an overseas remittance that are not involved in a cash transaction. In fact, there are usually no fees to actually exchange cash – the bank's fees are already included in the posted exchange rate. Also, you will always get a better rate when you exchange cash at a bank branch than at an airport exchange window.

Now, let's assume you are at the bank to exchange cash. You will look up at the blue board under the “Cash” category and find that there are two columns: buying and selling.

Let's say you have Korean won but you are planning to visit the U.S. and want some dollars. Look at the board, find U.S. dollars, and look across, under the “Cash – Buying” column. There is your rate – posted in Korean won.

If it were the other way around and you had U.S. dollars with which you wanted to buy Korean won, you would look at the board, find U.S. dollars, and look under the “Cash – Selling” column to find your rate (in Korean won). Now, let's assume you are wiring money. You will look up at the blue board under the “T/T” category where you will find that there are two columns: sending and receiving.

Let's say you want to send (wire transfer) Australian dollars from your account here in Korea to your home account in Australia. Look at the board, find Australian dollars and look across under the “T/T – Sending” column. There is your rate – posted in Korean won.

Or maybe the situation is reversed and your client is sending money to your account in Korea from their account in Australia. Look at the board, find Australian dollars and look across under the “T/T – Receiving” heading to find the rate (in Korean won) you will receive when it's sent.

Now, there may be two more columns on that display board that we haven't mentioned yet: the base rate column and the USD conversion rate column.

The base rate is a very important number, although more for the bank than for you. The Cash and T/T rates that affect you are based on the base rate, but you will never actually get quoted a rate from this column when you exchange or send money overseas at the bank. You can just think of the base rate as a way to quickly and easily compare rates across currencies – for example, it is the exchange rate we hear about in the news.

The last column is usually the USD conversion rate column. This is a handy reference that allows you to directly compare the base rate of your currency of interest in Korean won to the U.S. dollar base rate.

And last but not least, remember that you always need to bring your passport to the bank for any transaction that involves foreign currency. 📄



## CONTACT MICHELLE

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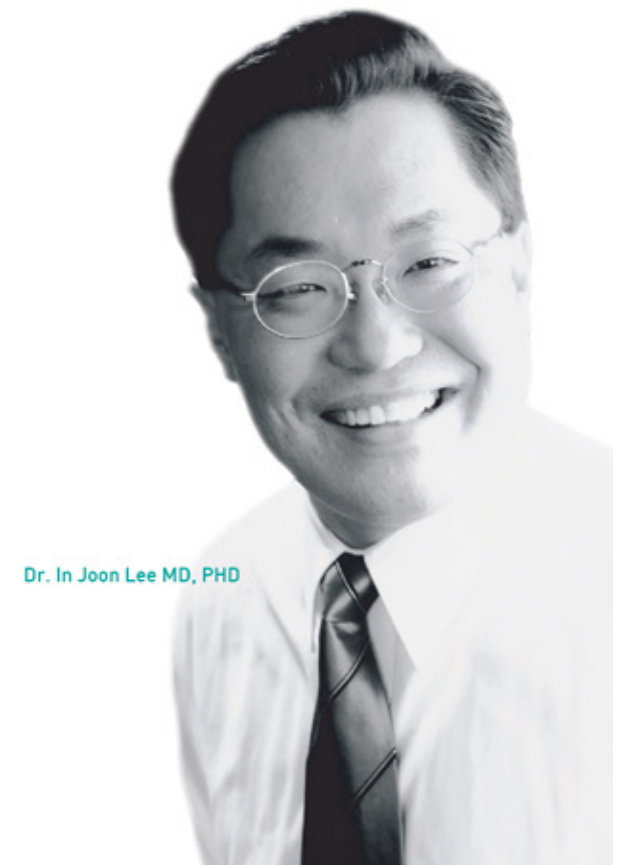
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# Super Color Super's Spring bloom

Story by Leon Amaysen and Nigel Gillis



Read more on  
our website:  
[groovekorea.com](http://groovekorea.com). Check  
us out on  
Facebook and  
Twitter for  
free stuff.





➤ Super Color Super is wearing concert ammo bandoliers this spring. Seoul veterans might recall a time when international concerts were few, far between and cost more than \$90. Working to change all that, Super Color Super has built up a steady stream of international artists coming to play here with increasing frequency. This season's line-up now looks comparable to many major met-

ropolitan concert schedules with Pg.Lost, Pictureplane, No Age, Blonde Redhead and Asobi Seksu.

Deemed by the agency as "an attempt to bring a rich and varied line-up spread out over a few weeks," this experiment could be the hit music addicts shaking with withdrawal need. A special incentive for seeing multiple shows is offered: Those holding tickets to see

Blonde Redhead on May 4 can get 10,000 won off tickets to see No Age and Asobi Seksu. Fans of live music should seize this opportunity to support it as much as possible. If the turnout stays strong, SCS will push to keep up a schedule like this year-round.

April kicks off with Pg.Lost, Pictureplane, & No Age.



## Pg.Lost –

## Swedish post-rock with big, dramatic songs

Like a post-rock rescue chopper, Sweden's Pg.Lost is on their way to revitalizing those long in need of their timbre fix. For folks still reminiscing over Mogwai's earth-shattering performance in Seoul last November (and fans of Explosions in the Sky, Mono, and Godspeed You! Black Emperor), Pg.Lost is highly recommended listening. The Korean post-rockers No Respect for Beauty (Pastel Records) are joining the entire, record-setting tour – 6 cities, 6 days, 6 shows. Satanic? Almost definitely.

## Sexy, darkly spiritual electro beats

Surfing over on a swell of witch-house chirps and electro rock beats is none other than the illustrious Travis Egedy, a.k.a. Pictureplane. Based out of Denver, this party spectre medium summarizes the cutting edge – his most recent, Real is a Feeling, landing accolades from the folks at Pitchfork and Stereogum in 2011. If you haven't heard of witch house you are obviously an undercover cop and we know you are an undercover cop.

## Pictureplane



## Blonde Redhead

## New York vets of alternative rock

Back in February indie heads across Korea were electrified with the revelation of an upcoming Blonde Redhead show.

Join these New York veterans of alternative rock in carving out a nu-gaze/psychodelia dreamscape at Seoul's AX-Korea.



## No Age

## They're tough, layered, and loud

L.A. noise rock/shoegaze at its finest, No Age is brilliant, subtle-but-loud, lo-fi rock. Dean Spunt and Randy Randall have perfected textured melodies, walls of guitar and drums, owing much to the musical genres that have influenced them. No Age is a must-see for fans of Lightning Bolt and Atlas Sound, as well as luminary acts such as Dinosaur Jr. and Sonic Youth.

Earning hell a brownie points from Pitchfork for Nouns (2008) and their more recent, Everything in Between (2010), the revolutionary duo has also gained notoriety for their awe-inspiring live shows, having performed in libraries, restaurants and even on the concrete banks of the L.A. River. Go see No Age.



## Asobi Seksu

## Dance along to Yuki Chikudate's upbeat/melancholy lyrics

Be sure to save some energy for after Blonde Redhead. Flickering in from New York the next week is the highly-anticipated and über-magical, dream pop band, Asobi Seksu. Bring some friends and dance along to Yuki Chikudate's upbeat yet melancholy lyrics; just don't be surprised if you find your heart folded into an origami crane before the night is over.

## SCHEDULE

April/May 2012

### Pg.Lost

**April 3:** Cheonan - Dolce  
**April 4:** Gwangju - Speakeasy  
**April 5:** Daegu - Urban  
**April 6:** Busan Rockhouse  
**April 7:** Seoul - TBA  
**April 8:** Daejeon Cantina

### Pictureplane

**April 11:** Gwangju- Bubble  
**April 12:** Daegu - Urban  
**April 13:** Busan - Almost Famous  
**April 14:** Seoul - EXIT

### Blonde Redhead

**May 4:** Seoul AX Hall

### Asobi Seksu

**May 11:** Busan - Vinyl Underground  
**May 12:** Seoul - Rolling Hall

### No Age

**April 27:** Busan - Vinyl Underground  
**April 28:** Seoul - Rolling Hall

**TICKETS:** For tickets, go to [www.supercolorsuper.com](http://www.supercolorsuper.com)  
**COMPS:** Go to [facebook.com/groovekorea](https://www.facebook.com/groovekorea) to catch some righteous giveaways for these shows.

Super Color Super is a collective of artists and musicians organizing concerts and helming creative initiatives. Bringing a variety of local and overseas talent together in Korea for the past two years, it has grown into an internationally-recognized indie booking agency, applauded for its efforts to put on concerts with lower ticket prices. Most recently, the collective organized a stunning show with Mogwai, which brought some 1,300 fans to Seoul's AX Hall.



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# PRODIGY TO PROTAGONIST NIC FANCIULLI

*Groove with SeoulVibes*



➤ Nic Fanciulli first caught our attention when he shared the decks with the legendary Derrick Carter at Club Garden. His ability to blend into the previous set and make it his own created a lasting memory for all.

Fanciulli's versatility to open, headline or close a night is not only a reflection of his artistry but his character. His collaborations on and off the decks have changed the electronic landscape the world over. His tour schedule, production and record label have solidified him as a protagonist for quality dance music.

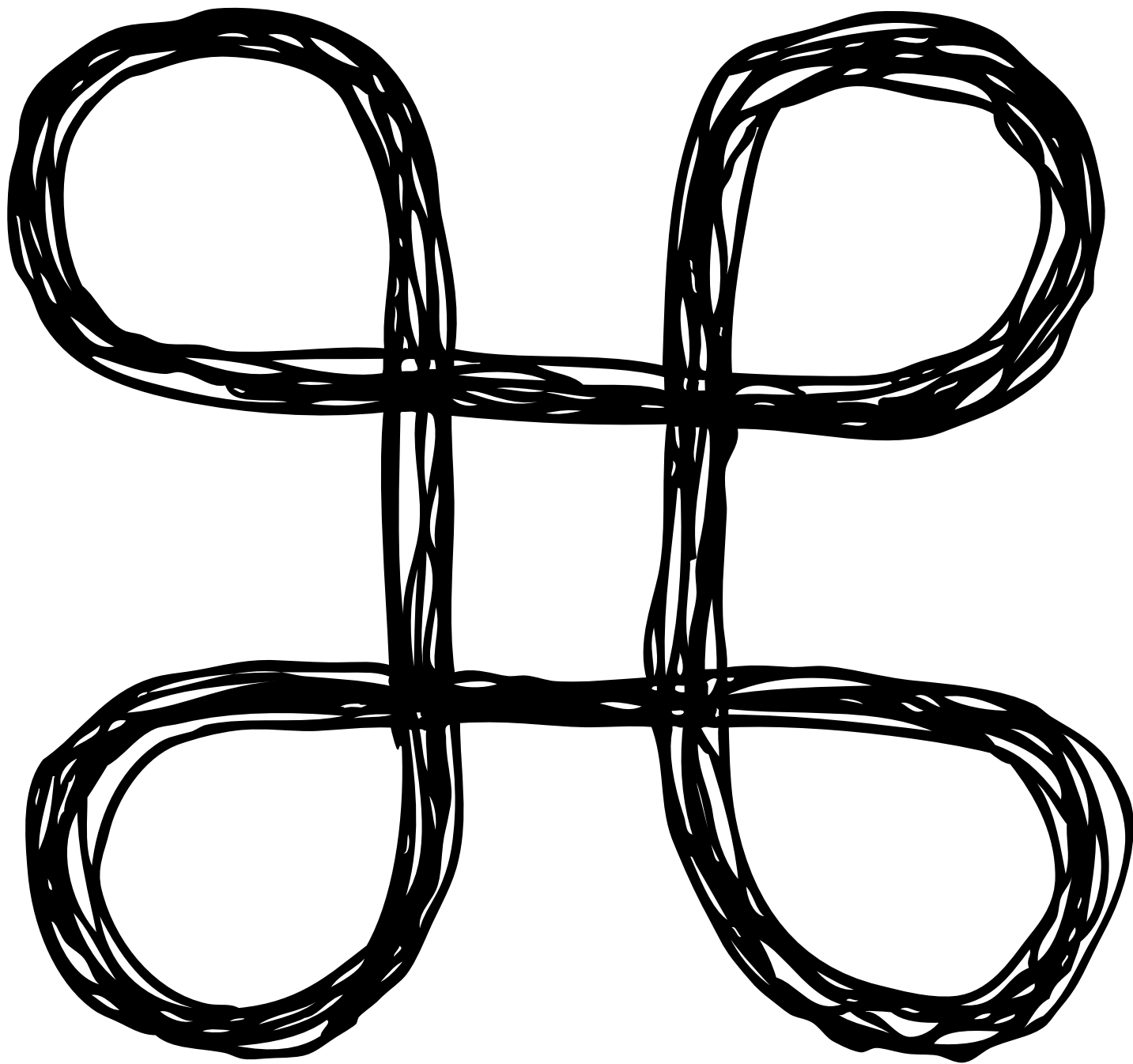
Presently he is in the studio putting the finishing touches on his upcoming album with EQ Recordings (Balance 021).

For information on Fanciulli's Asian tour, check out his website.

Fanciulli graciously took some time off to grant us an interview.



*Always with a keen eye on bringing new talent through, Nic has used Saved as a platform to break new and exciting young producers as well as maintaining a desire to put out quality releases from other stalwarts of the scene.*



#### **How did growing up in Maidstone influence your career?**

Maidstone has definitely had a big impact on my career. We had a thriving electronic music scene in the late '90s. My favorite club was a place called Atomics; this is where I really learned about electronic music. Atomics hosted a Friday night called Club Class. All the big names would feature there, from the likes of Sasha & Digweed all the way through to Carl Cox. Then on the Saturday night it would be a drum and bass night called Pure Science, which at the time was the longest weekly drum and bass event in the country. I was exposed to so many styles of music that it taught me to become more open minded and creative in what I was playing myself.

When I became resident for Club Class it was the best feeling. This was my hometown and I was playing at the best night in the area. Week in, week out I would get to warm up for the likes of Pete Tong and Paul Oakenfold, so each week would be different, but my job was to always make the crowd ready for the main DJ. This is where I learned to become a real DJ, as I think it's the hardest part of DJing. I got a lot of help from the guests that played and I still owe them all so many thanks for the help they gave me. I think that's why I still always try and push new talent, as I wouldn't be here now without the help of my peers.

#### **What is your definition of a DJ?**

It's hard to say really as there are so many aspects of a DJ. But I feel the most important thing is connecting with the audience. At the end of the day, the DJ is an entertainer, so you need to have that connection in order to keep the audience entertained. I think the main thing, and I always stress this, is that you have to enjoy it yourself as this will always come through in what you do and help create that connection with the crowd. The rest then is down to what you play, and that's where the people decide if they like you or not.

#### **What do you attribute to your success as a DJ/producer?**

I would have to say my residency at my local club night Club Class. As I mentioned before, it was a place that used to invite all these remarkable guests, so I learned to be very adaptable in certain situations, from opening the night to closing the night and everything in between. Every week would be a different situation, and I learned from my mistakes. You need to read the crowd and also recognize the time and place to play certain records. This was an area that I made mistakes in during the early part of my career, but I learned quickly to fix them. I also learned a lot from the guys that used to play week in, week out. The majority of the DJs were genuinely nice people and did not forget we all started in the bedroom making mix tapes.

Once I was happy with my DJing, I wanted to learn how to make music. I got put in touch with a producer named Andy Chatterley and we started making records. We collaborated under the moniker Skylark. He was the guy that basically taught me everything in the studio. I owe him so much.

#### **What was your initial reaction when you were nominated for a Grammy?**

Shock. I think it was because I never imagined that a deep house record would be on their radar. We were up against the likes of Madonna and Coldplay. We didn't win, but it was something that I'm really proud about.

#### **Who is your favorite artist at the moment?**

I think James Blake did a great job to create a very underground sound and getting it to the masses. Of course, from the house music world there are some really exciting new artists like \$ME, Clio, Philip Bader, Andrea Olivia and Alex Tepper that are really influencing my sound at the moment.

#### **What are your best and worst moments for you as a DJ?**

Stopping the wrong CD player during a live Essential Mix on Radio 1. That was not the best thing I could have done. Being nominated for a Grammy was one of my many highlights.

#### **Where is your favorite club?**

Womb – Tokyo. It's simple. I love the culture and I love the people. They are one of the most patient crowds in the world and I get away with playing records that I would never dream of in other clubs. I would play there every week if I could.

#### **Is there a track that you never get tired of playing out?**

Laurent Garnier – "Man with the Red Face." This is one of those records that we all dream about making. It's a record that you could never imagine writing. In fact, it really is that clever. I only have to play a second of the record and people know exactly what it is. To sum it up, this track is a complete masterpiece and so ahead of its time when it first came out.

#### **What distinguishes clubs in Asia from other regions?**

I'll be honest with you and say I don't know. I don't really judge clubs on places, but by how the night goes.

#### **Do you feel that technology is replacing or improving a DJ's set?**

I think technology evolves constantly and the audience's expectations are changing all the time, so you constantly have to adapt, whether that's through technology, music choice or mixing styles. Technological advances are always exciting, but there's a certain character and feel to playing vinyl that cannot be replicated. I've chosen to use Traktor with CD controllers. I find that I still get the hands on approach by using the CDs but then I get the added bonus of having lots more music and EFXs. At the end of the day all that matters is that people are enjoying themselves and having fun on the floor.


#### **How does one make the transition from DJ to producer?**

As a DJ you learn to see what works and what doesn't, which is always a good start. Then after that you have to really learn the hardware. Nowadays, it's so much easier as computers make the whole process that much easier.

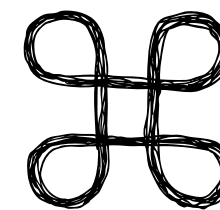
#### **What was your vision when you created your record label Saved?**

It was originally a label to release my own music. But then I realized people would get bored of just my own music. We were getting sent so many amazing records that I wanted to sign too, so it just made sense. Our vision is simple – if it's good and I play it, we will put it out.

#### **What can we expect from Nic Fanciulli?**

Wow that's a hard one to answer about yourself. I think that I always try and bring enjoyment with the music I play and I also like to throw in a few surprises, like a special re-edit of an old record that I did. Every set is different, but I always play with the same goal of bringing energy to the night. 

**NIC FANCIULLI**



SAVED

For more information on Nic Fanciulli, go to his website, [www.nicfanciulli.com](http://www.nicfanciulli.com), or his record label [www.savedrecords.com](http://www.savedrecords.com).



# JEONJU INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

— COME FOR THE CINEMA, STAY FOR THE BIBIMBAP

THE 13TH JIFF RUNS APRIL 26 TO MAY 5;  
FULL FESTIVAL LINE-UP WILL BE ANNOUNCED APRIL 2

Story by Dean Crawford

Illustration by Adela Ordoñez

*"Most festivals try to get celebrities and promote the festival with their names. But I think the red carpet stuff is just luxurious garbage. At JIFF, the real heroes are the filmmakers."*

*Jeonju International Film Festival Programmer Yoo Un-seong*





## JEONJU –

► If you thought Jeonju was famous solely for its delicious cuisine, exciting music scene, historical buildings and culture, you'd be wrong. While all of the above do make Jeonju a great place to live, the highlight for many comes every spring as the city becomes awash with luminous yellow "JIFF volunteer" jackets as the Jeonju International Film Festival comes to town.

Now entering its 13th year, the Jeonju International Film festival will be held along the Cinema Street in the city's downtown area, as well as other parts including the vibrant nightlife district beside Jeonbuk University.

While it might not have the worldwide acclaim of Cannes or Sundance Film Festival, it has been rightly regarded as one of the most important film festivals in Asia. Festival Scope highlights its importance on the Asian festival circuit as it introduces "independent and experimental films from around the world to audiences," whereas One One Four praises its "focus on film aesthetics over commerce."

With several categories in competition, the talent pool is high. The main prize, the Woosuk Award, goes to the winner of the International Film competition, where 12 directors are chosen to take part and invariably go onto big things. Past winners include Nobuhiro Suwa for his film "Mother" and Canada's Dennis Cotes for his film "Drifting States." There are also awards for Best Korean Feature Film, Best Korean Short as well as the Asian Feature Film competition.

Demonstrating the festival's dedication to independent cinema is the Jeonju Digital Project. Each year, JIFF distributes around 50 million won to three filmmakers who each make a short film over 30 minutes in length. Those films will then have their premieres at the festival and be distributed as one film in Korea and throughout the world by JIFF. This year's choices for the Jeonju Digital Project 2012 are Raya Martin of the Philippines, Vimukthi Jayasundara of Sri Lanka and Ying Liang from China. You realize the scale of the project when award-winning filmmakers such as Ying Liang declare they are "a bit surprised to be part of the project, since masters such as Antonioni and Soderbergh were once the participants."

However, it is often the movies and events not in competition that generate a great deal of buzz. The Focus On section allows the audience to become familiar with prominent figures in world cinema such as Pedro Costa, Bela Tarr and the great Pier Paolo Pasolini.

This year's Focus On is showing the works of one of the lesser known "masters of Japanese cinema" in the West, Tomu Uchida, a real treat considering his films are hardly ever shown and are not widely available on DVD.

There is also a healthy selection of animated and short films, but this writer's personal favorite categories are the Stranger than Cinema and Cinemafest sections. Stranger than Cinema focuses on the "contemporary avant-garde cineastes standing on the frontline of aesthetic experiments." First launched in 2004, the section has seen a passionate following showing the works of Peter Kubelka, Peter Tscherkassky, Artavazd, and Peleshian to name a few. Last year's festival saw a return from living legend Jean-Luc Godard.

*While it might not have the worldwide acclaim of a Cannes or Sundance Film Festival, it has been rightly regarded as one of the most important film festivals in Asia.*



A R T S & C U L T U R E  
Jeonju Film Festival

For many, the highlight of the whole festival is the Cinemafest. This section comprises of midnight screenings on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, showing three films that run into the early hours of the morning. Whether it be a triple-header showcasing the best of Blaxpoitation, Music Documentary or the films of John Waters, these nights always sell out, and the hottest ticket every year is the horror trilogy.


From vampires to cannibals, clowns to zombies, there's a load of fun to be had watching Korean and foreign audiences jump out of their skins. It's even better comparing the zombies on screen to the zombies in the aisles at 6 a.m. as students wander aimlessly, honing in on free milk and snacks. After six-plus hours in a theater, the resemblance is staggering. If you can manage to stay up all the way through, it's a great night.

### There's lots more to do:

Not content with a wide array of films from all over the globe costing a mere 5,000 won per ticket? For another 5,000 won, JIFF puts on events such as "Cine Talk," in which filmmakers stay behind after their screenings and talk with the audience about the process of making their film. Or if you want to take your understanding of the filmmaking process one step further, you can participate in JIFF's Master Class seminars, which are dedicated to a specific field of filmmaking. Taking place over three days, JIFF describes the event as a "rare opportunity to meet legendary masters sharing their knowledge to cinephiles and students."

JIFF provides free outdoor screenings and concerts over the long weekend. No Brain and Crying Nut are two popular Korean rock bands that have performed in recent years, and there are buskers and art exhibitions around the festival.

The 13th Jeonju International Film Festival will run from April 26 to May 5, with the full festival line-up due to be announced on April 2. With a host of films and seminars lined up, as well as free screenings and other events, the 13th Jeonju International Film Festival will be a great event for everyone that attends.

Besides, even if you don't like films you can always eat the bibimbap. 



### Directions

After taking a bus or train to Jeonju, tell a taxi driver "Geksa Megabox" to get to the main area of the festival or to buy tickets, then follow the yellow jackets.



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# Yoo Un-seong

## JIFF programmer

Interview by Dean Crawford



"Most festivals try to get celebrities and promote the festival with their names. But I think the red carpet stuff is just luxurious garbage. At JIFF, the real heroes are the filmmakers."

Yoo Un-seong

➤ Since its inception in 2000, the Jeonju International Film Festival has seen a line up of films from Asian masters such as Japan's Takashi Miike and Korea's own Park Chan-wook, through to master auteurs David Cronenberg and Jean-Luc Godard.

Not content with simply providing big names to draw an audience, JIFF programmers scour the globe looking for the best line ups cinema has to offer, including screening the rare works of great filmmakers such as Bela Tarr and Jerzy Skolimowski in a bid to challenge and stimulate audiences. The monumental task of bringing hundreds of films to a festival is no easy feat. We managed to track down Jeonju International Film Festival programmer Yoo Un-seong to talk about his role, his love of film and how JIFF compares to films festivals around the globe.

**Before we talk about JIFF, I believe you have just returned from the Berlin Film festival. How was that and what were you doing there?**

Mainly watching movies, meeting with directors, festival people and sales agents. And aside from selecting films for this year's Jeonju International Film Festival, I watched one or two Russian silent or early sound films in the Retrospective program every day. It was quite helpful to soften my anger caused by some bad films at Berlinale. Even though there were some strong titles like Bela Tarr's "The Turin Horse," Ulrich Koehler's "Sleeping Sickness" and Asghar Farhadi's "A Separation," last year's Berlin Film Festival was a total mess. As a whole, this year's Berlin Film Festival was a bit better, but the jury's decisions were so poor. They gave the Golden Bear to quite an old-fashioned movie from the Taviani Brothers ... In my opinion, the strongest titles in competition were Miguel Gomes's near-masterpiece "Tabu," Christian Petzold's delicate and intellectual "Barbara" and Ursula Meier's heartfelt "Sister." Among the films screened in the Forum section, I really liked Denis Cote's documentary "Bestiaire," which totally deconstructs the conventional way of personification in animal documentaries. He attended JIFF's Jeonju Digital Project in 2010 and made "The Enemy Lines" with support from JIFF.

**How long have you been a programmer?**

I started my job as a programmer of JIFF in September of 2004. But before then, I had worked as a member of the selection committee for the Korean short film program of JIFF since 2002.

**How did you become a programmer?**

Our ex-programmer Jung Soo-wan called me. At first, I hesitated because, until then, I had never been to any other countries. I was just a cinephile that grew up in a Korean film culture in full bloom around the mid-1990's. Before becoming a programmer, I was contributing film reviews to Cine 21, a Korean film magazine.

**What does your job involve?**

Roughly, I'm in charge of programming for different categories including International Competitions, World Cinema, Stranger than Cinema – the avant-garde section, and some special programs. In addition, some book publications for retrospective programs.

**What has been your favorite JIFF festival so far? Why?**

It's difficult to pick one. If I must, I would say that the 2011 edition was my favorite. To me, the most recent edition of JIFF is always the best, because I believe JIFF has always evolved every year. So the upcoming edition will be the best.

**How do you go about choosing the films for the festival?**

I prefer filmmakers which perfectly recognize the present situation of cinema – another transition period. At the same time, I respect filmmakers who recognize their own position in the history of cinema. In brief, the filmmakers daring to be in the frontline as well as carefully looking back at the footsteps of other people. To me, the ideal model for this kind of filmmaker is Pedro Costa. He also attended JIFF's Jeonju Digital Project in 2008 and made "The Rabbit Hunters" with support from JIFF.

**Can you tell me about a film you chose for last year's festival and why you did so?**

In particular, I want to talk about a film to which we bought the distribution rights last year: Bela Tarr's "The Turin Horse." JIFF released it on Feb. 23 and it's still showing in theaters. I watched it at Berlinale last year. After having watched it, I was sure that it was the extremely beautiful swan song to the disappearing 35mm filmmaking period as well as to the director himself. And it's one of those rare movies which shows everything in the film; humans, animals, plants and even inanimate objects, in the absolute nowness without imposing any meaning on them. It is a pure cinematic experience.

**Last year's opening film was "A Separation," which went on to win Best Foreign Film at this year's Oscars. Are there any films that you think will go onto big things this year?**

A Separation was surely great, and it was extremely well-received last year at JIFF. At present, I will keep silent about this year's big events. Please kindly wait until JIFF announces the full line-up, which is released early April 2012. But I'm sure that the Uchida Tomu special program will be one of the big events this year. This year, we will also screen two rarely shown silent films of Uchida, "Sweat" and "Police-man," along with other representative works. Don't miss them.

**You and your fellow programmer Jo Ji-hoon are responsible for the foreign film selections. How does the selection criteria differ from the Korean film choices?**

In principle, there is no difference in criteria between us. But in the case of Korean programming, it's much harder than foreign programming because JIFF is troubled with the fact that most Korean filmmakers or producers want to send their films to Cannes. In spite of this difficult situation, JIFF has successfully managed to discover some important Korean films like Noh Young-seok's "Daytime Drinking," Kim Dong-joo's "A Broom Becomes a Goldfish," last year's Lee Kang-hyun's "The Color of Pain" and Lee Seung-joon's "Planet of Snail," the best documentary winner at International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (IDFA).


**What makes JIFF different from other film festivals and why should people come?**

From the start, JIFF has always tried to strengthen the specialized audience for innovative, adventurous and extraordinary films. I'm also one of the beneficiaries of this effort. I watched Bela Tarr's "Satan-tango" for the first time at the 1st JIFF (2000) when I visited JIFF as a member of the audience.

After becoming a programmer, I decided to meet the director and take him to South Korea. So I went to Budapest in 2005 for a meeting with Bela Tarr in person. Finally, I had a full retrospective on him in 2008. Most festivals are trying to get celebrities and promote the festival with their names. But I think the red carpet stuff is just luxurious garbage at festivals. At JIFF, the real heroes are the filmmakers who are struggling to make films with uncompromising minds. That is the reason why filmmakers like Pedro Costa, James Benning, Jose Luis Guerin and Lav Diaz are highly welcomed by JIFF's audience, including teenagers.

In 2010, when Pedro Costa visited JIFF, he was astonished at the fact that even Jean-Marie Straub's films were totally sold out and nobody walked out during the screening. I'm sure that JIFF has the greatest audience in the world. JIFF is the best place not only for uncompromising filmmakers to find the right audience, but also for the audience to meet those filmmakers in person, on Cinema Street.

**What will you do once JIFF is over?**

Reading David Hilbert's The Foundations of Geometry again. Watching all of Tex Avery's work and working on the summer edition of F, a Korean art magazine, of which I'm one of the editors. 

**"I'm sure that JIFF has the greatest audience in the world. JIFF is the best place not only for uncompromising filmmakers to find the right audience, but also for the audience to meet those filmmakers in person, on Cinema Street."**



## Short Stories in Retribution: AN ART SHOW

Story & art by Richard Cornell

Nov. 23, 2010: a hotel room in Gangnam. I had been in Korea for a day when I found out that my father had suffered from respiratory failure. They had placed him in a medically-induced coma until they could see if he had suffered any brain damage. I went to my first day of job training.

Nov. 27, 2010: my parents' anniversary. My mother tells me that I need to come home. The brain damage is severe and irreparable; my family has decided to take him off life support. I played him his favorite song over the phone for his anniversary gift, listening as "Stranger on the Shore" was punctuated by the beeps of an EKG monitor and my sobbing mother.

Christmas Day: I had travelled around the world twice in two weeks. I had watched my best friend die, and left him in a silver box next to a hole

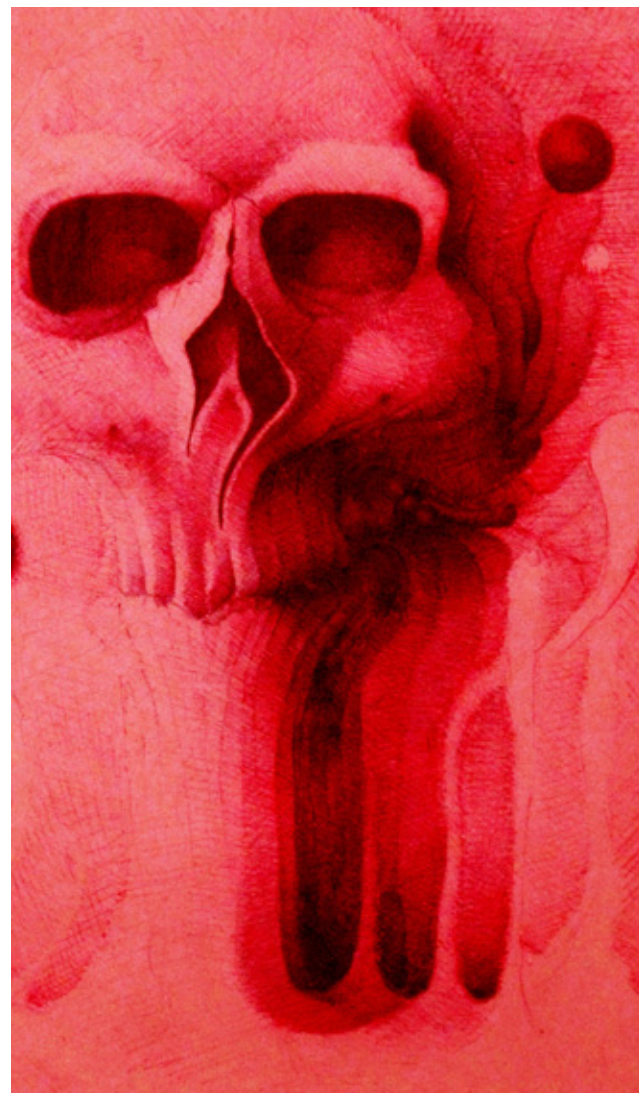
in the ground. I had seen my entire family dissolve as they argued over unchangeable events. Most notably, I had left my mother, the strongest person I know, a mess in an airport 7,000 miles away.

### One year later

My girlfriend and I have been deciding what to do for Christmas. It was approaching the anniversary of my father's death, and she had recently found out that her father was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Needless to say, it was going to be a difficult holiday season for the both of us. We both wanted to be with our families, but between our work schedules and financial situations, it wouldn't be possible.

*"Always leave a place better than the way it was when you got there. That way, if everybody does it, the world will always be getting better."*

Richard Cornell Sr.



But then something amazing happened. A small group of people that work with my girlfriend heard about our situation. Being part of a Christian-based organization that does charity work, they decided to buy us tickets to our respective homes to be with our families. My girlfriend would get to see her father before his surgery, and I would get to see my father's tombstone for the first time. My employer pulled strings to get me the time off, and with the help of all of these people, our dreams came to fruition.

Receiving such acts of kindness can't help but change a person's perspective. Since returning to Korea from that vacation, I have thought a lot about how fortunate I am. The last year my father and I spent together was by far my fondest. The last week we spent together was a road trip to the Grand Canyon. The last thing we said to each other was "I love you, man." I was truly blessed with a fairytale ending to an amazing story.

So I have decided to make a body of art in response. This series is not a means of monetary retribution, but rather a means of showing the change that such acts of selflessness can provoke in a person. My father once told me, "Always leave a place better than the way it was when you got there. That way, if everybody does it, the world will always be getting better." To the few anonymous people who made a sacrifice for me, know that you are doing just that.

The exhibit opening is on Saturday, May 12 at ONDA in Nowon, and begins at 6 p.m. The artwork exhibited will be two series done in ballpoint pen and oil paint. Admission is free; wine and hors d'oeuvres will be free as well. The food is good, and bottomless beer is available for 10,000 won. Original work and prints will be available for sale. A donation box, as well as all profits made from all print sales will be donated to The Angel House phanage.



*"I was truly blessed with a fairytale ending to an amazing story. So I have decided to make a body of art in response."*

Richard Cornell



### Directions

Go to Nowon Station, line 4, exit 9. Take your immediate right at Skin Food and continue straight for about 3 minutes. ONDA will be on the 3rd floor on the right hand side.

For more information visit  
[www.ondaonda.com](http://www.ondaonda.com)

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# At the Box Office

By Dean Crawford

April  
**12** Action - Adventure  
96 Minutes

**BATTLESHIP**  
Directed by Peter Berg



April  
**5** Drama - Action  
84 minutes

**THE HUNGER GAMES**  
Directed by Gary Ross



## P R E V I E W

Last year was undoubtedly the year of the sequel. The AV Club reported that there were no fewer than 27 sequels, which accounted for 1-in-5 wide releases in America. This figure itself is quite worrying, but even more so when you realize that in those “sequels” were a record number of “fourth” and “fifth” movies. If you hoped for a bit more originality in the first half of 2012, you are going to be disappointed.

One of the biggest films of the year is Battleship. Made for \$200 million, the film is based on the Hasbro game of the same name. You remember that game, right? Your boats are adrift at sea and you choose to be either a naval officer or an alien and then try to blow each other up ... No, I don't remember that part of the game either. It appears that the producers have taken some artistic license with the story.

Battleship the movie is set in the Hawaiian Islands where an international naval fleet at Pearl Harbor engage in a dynamic and intense battle against an alien species known as The Regents. The aliens come to planet Earth on a mission to build a power source in the ocean. Upon their visit, they come into contact with the naval fleet.

Despite the film being based on a board game, which gives it as much credibility as someone making a film out of the card game Snap, director Peter Berg seems to be excited about the project. He even goes so far as to describe Battleship as an Art House movie. It sounds strange at first, but when you hear his reasoning, it kind of works. He tells Moviefone.com: “Simple, boring game. Right? The core of the game Battleship is this very violent component, which is a great engine for a movie.”

On Peter Berg's approach to the feel of the film, he insists that he wanted the film to be “human” and he wanted emotion. Strong words indeed, and miles away from what our initial opinions of the film may be.

And what's to say that it won't be an art film? Alexander Skarsgard is a rising film star and came off the set of Lars Von Trier's Melancholia straight into this. Liam Neeson's stock continues to rise after successful outings in The Grey and Taken. The effects look huge and with the filmmaker's artistic approach, it looks like we could have a respectable film on our hands ... until, you realize they have cast Rihanna. Sure, she can belt out a catchy pop tune, but does she give a film based on a board game an air of credibility? I think not. No matter how Battleship turns out, this could well be the start of a whole new exciting era in film. Just think, Snakes and Ladders or Eye Spy the movie. The possibilities are endless.

Battleship will hit Korean screens on April 12.

## P R E V I E W

To celebrate the release of Inglorious Basterds, Quentin Tarantino compiled a list of his 20 favorite films that had been released since he'd started making movies. The list was in no particular order, except for his overwhelming passion for the No. 1 slot: “If there's any movie that's been made since I've been making movies that I wish I had made, it's that one.” That film is Kinji Fukasaku's Battle Royale. Based on a book of the same name and set in a dystopian overpopulated future, the Japanese government captures the young and forces them to kill each other under the revolutionary Battle Royale Act. Also based on a novel by Suzanne Collins, a modern day version of this theme is The Hunger Games, which will be released in Korea in April.

The Hunger Games is set in Panem, a “new land that rose from the ruins of a post-apocalyptic North America,” which is divided into districts to keep the people under control. After a failed rebellion, the rulers of Panem force each district to volunteer one boy and one girl to fight to the death in the Hunger Games, which is broadcast live on television. To the victor, riches and spoils await. Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence), a hardened survivor, has waited in the hope that she can lift her family out of poverty, but in a cruel twist of fate, it is her younger sister who is selected for the games in her first attempt. Katniss volunteers to take her sister's place, knowing that it would mean a near-certain death sentence for her sibling. Katniss inadvertently becomes a serious contender to succeed in the deadly Hunger Games.

Suzanne Collins' novel has been described as a “brilliantly imagined dystopia, impressive with breathtaking action and clear philosophical concerns.” And while there are no concrete reviews out there for the film, the trailer gives an impression that the movie version is going to be a cross between The Sixth Sense and Battle Royale in terms of style and tone. It's more colorful and “cyber punk” than Battle Royale, but the themes and tone seem similar, which is a good thing. You would also think that having Oscar-nominee Jennifer Lawrence, who was excellent in Winter's Bone, play the lead role would be a good thing, too. But the Internet has gone crazy; this turned out to be a controversial choice, due to Katniss being described as having straight black hair, grey eyes and olive skin. But Collins herself was happy with the casting of Lawrence calling her the perfect choice and describing her as “powerful, vulnerable, beautiful, unforgiving and brave.”

So while some fans may not be entirely happy over the adaptation of the novel thus far, I don't see this as a deterrent of the film. It's impossible to please everyone. Just look at the Twilight and the Harry Potter series. Every reader will have a different interpretation of how a film should be cast and designed, but if its creator has had nothing but positive things to say about the film thus far, it can only bode well for the finished product.

Release Date: (April-April 5)

# Korean DVD Corner

By Daniel Joseph Vorderstrasse

## R E V I E W

Korean film enters the courtroom as lawyers seek to uncover the truth behind a gruesome murder. The plot develops over a curious chain of events that take place under unusual circumstances. Han Cheol-min (Jang Hyeok) returns home during the early hours of his wedding anniversary to be greeted by police on his doorstep and is arrested for murdering his wife. According to those in the know, she was seeking divorce and grew increasingly weary over his suspicions of her infidelity. She sought safety from a jealous husband.

Upon acquiring defense counsel Kang Seong-hee (Ha Jeong-woo) due to his recent success in a celebrity libel case, the defense is confident the prosecution only has circumstantial evidence and a “not guilty” verdict could be attained. Even though there is no body, hair, DNA or fingerprints, Cheol-min is quickly condemned in the court of public opinion as his case is expedited through the judiciary. As the case unfolds, the unique nature of the crime and its underlying causes unfold.

In the midst of the trial, it is unveiled that prosecutor Ahn Min-ho (Park Hee-seon) had crossed paths with the defendant earlier and powerful people in the public service sector want Han Cheol-min out of the way quickly and quietly. The case becomes more disturbing as the narrative reaches into the past to explain how the characters' respective lives have reached this intersection.

If you're looking for a good film, don't get your hopes up. A disappointment of epic proportions should be expected as it is painstakingly difficult to produce a solid sentence of praise. The plot contains potential, but was vastly depreciated by character underdevelopment and loose ends.

Watching the trial unfold is comical and ridiculous to anyone with any amount of legal knowledge. The storyline was staggered and the lack of suspense fails to hold the viewer's attention. Indeed, it was not an easy film to finish. Nothing in particular separates this feature from any other run-of-the-mill, big budget suspense thriller – except for the fact that this is one of the worst.

Pick this flick up with significantly lower expectations than I, and an enjoyable two hours could be had.

## R E V I E W

When the king's loyal servant is labeled a traitor, he orders his son and daughter to flee right before he's slaughtered before their eyes. Entrusted only with his father's bow, the son restrains himself from feelings of revenge and guides his sister through the sprawling hills to safety at his father's request. Thirteen years pass and Nam-yi (Park Hae-il) evolves into a supreme marksman and Ja-in's (Moon Chae-won) guardian.

When Seo-goan (Kim Mu-yeol), a diplomat's son, is to wed Ja-in, Nam-yi considers his duty to safeguard his sister complete. But during the wedding, the second Manchu Invasion of Korea interrupts the ceremony as the savage warriors rape and pillage the small city of Gaeseung, enslaving those citizens who survived the massacre.

Before the invasion, Nam-yi contained little ambition. Watching his father get killed by those he trusted most left him with an empty feeling inside. But after surviving capture by the Qing dynasty's elite warriors – led by Jyu Shin-ta (Ryoo Seung-ryong) – Nam-yi must liberate his sister and avenge the fallen. His only weapon is his bow; with it, he seeks to release his sister from the barbarians' grasp while freeing as many of the 500,000 captured as possible.

Also known as War of the Arrows, the film depicts the barbaric deeds of the Qing dynasty through a familial bond between the protagonist and his younger sister. It's set along an all-too-familiar good vs. evil formula and involves the finest archer each country has to offer.

Park Hae-il, nominated in the Asian Film Awards' Best Actor category, does a fine job portraying Nam-yi, but the performance is not quite award worthy. Plenty of action with medieval weaponry ensues and the absence of eye-popping special effects and computer-generated graphics are welcomed.

Unfortunately the climatic battle proceeds far too long and possesses a lack of staying power, ultimately reducing the film's overall appeal.

There are few surprises – including the finale's outcome.

**THE CLIENT** (의뢰인)



**ARROW** (최종병기 활)  
The Ultimate Weapon







# 'No Exit' offers nothing new on North Korea

By Todd Sharp

## No Exit: North Korea, Nuclear Weapons and International Security

Jonathan D. Pollack  
247 pp, Routledge

### Pollack can't be judged

*too harshly, because everyone seems to be stopping short of calling for real change: War would be a nightmare, and neither full-fledged engagement with the North nor the United States washing its hands of the peninsula would be politically viable. One of the latter two options is going to have to be tried if this is to end well, though, and eventually experts on the subject are going to have to start saying so.*

➤ The field of North Korea-watching carries a few inherent difficulties. For starters, few scholars seem capable of striking the necessary balance between acknowledging both North Korea's crimes against humanity and the misdeeds committed against it, such as George W. Bush's lost chances for diplomacy to its treatment as a chess piece by the Soviet Union and Red China.

For another, the isolation of the state makes its motives unclear: Two years later, long-time observers of the rogue regime remain divided over its motives for the Cheonan sinking and Yeonpyeong Island bombardment, as well as what these attacks suggest will come next.

Which brings us to our final problem: In the 1960s, had anyone been told that South Korea would have a GDP 25.5 times greater than the North and that all of the Kim regime's natural allies would have collapsed or reformed, surely they'd have guessed that the North wouldn't still be threatening its neighbors and walling itself off from the outside world. Yet North Korea's headline approach continues, and predictions about its future, no matter how informed the source, reek of guesswork.

Jonathan D. Pollack's "No Exit: North Korea, Nuclear Weapons and International Security" makes a few contributions to this field, especially to the reader with only a basic understanding of inter-Korean relations. It also does an adept job with the first two problems listed above, explaining that the North's actions have much to do with mistrust, not only of the West, but of its supposed allies in the Soviet Union and China. Its antagonism with the United States looms largest, though, and Pollack's explanation of its desire to avoid becoming another Iraq makes its pursuit of nuclear arms appear rational, if undesirable from a global or regional perspective.

The third problem that prevents this book from being a groundbreaking one, though, as Pollack's summary of how North Korea got here takes up 180 pages and his conclusions a mere 30 pages. He does reiterate the increasingly clear point that China cannot be expected to rein the North in, as the Kim regime has been cultivating independence from its giant neighbor ever since Chinese generals' imperious treatment of Kim Il-sung during the Korean War. China has, in fact, been attempting to convince the North to launch reforms similar to what it implemented under Deng Xiaoping, only to be rebuffed and watch as its troublesome client state continues to generate incidents the Chinese consider bad for business.

That it continues to support them at all shows how much the Chinese fear a truly desperate North Korea, and how much we should too.

North Korea's emphasis on the military-first state is also unlikely to change even with Kim Jong-il's death and Kim Jong-un's ascension; Pollack identifies this policy as one that has essentially been in effect since the early days of Kim Il-sung's tenure. Kim Jong-il's touting of it in the mid-'90s may have been an effective branding move to distract from the terrible famine of those years, but did not result in a fundamental change of procedure.

So, then what? If North Korea will not drop its military emphasis or its nuclear program, and if China's influence has been overstated, what can be done? Here's how Pollack sums it up:

"When, whether and how major change occurs in North Korea remains to be seen. Until such time, the United States, its regional allies and partners, and the international community as a whole must seek to ensure that this embattled system does not do larger damage to peace and security in Northeast Asia and beyond."

In other words, don't expect much, but you've got to hang on. Unfortunately, the longer the balancing act between threatening the North and enticing it back to the negotiating table persists, the more we risk eventual collapse or outright conflict, both of which would be devastating to South Korea. Ambiguous affirmations of the status quo ultimately serve no one.

Pollack can't be judged too harshly, because everyone seems to be stopping short of calling for real change. If the United States and South Korea want real change, it could come in three forms: 1) War, which would be a nightmare even if nuclear weapons aren't used and China chooses not to get involved, 2) A genuine effort at reconciliation, probably involving aid and a peace treaty, or 3) Withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean Peninsula and the United States trusting that the South can handle its own security, limiting its involvement here to trade and diplomacy.

One of the latter two options is going to have to be tried if this is to end well, though either would require acts of real political courage to accomplish. Eventually experts on the subject are going to have to start taking the lead.

Pollack, whatever insights he may offer, is not that brave.

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to add an exhibition for the May issue.20 foreign  
**EXHIBITS**  
for April

1

**Artist Name:**  
various Korean female artists  
**Exhibition name:**  
KWAA Today  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 3  
**Location:**  
Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul Arts Center (Nambu Bus Terminal station)  
**Medium:**  
Paintings

2

**Artist Name:**  
various  
**Exhibition name:**  
Gallery Golmok Art Bazaar  
**Running Dates:**  
every Sunday beginning April  
**Location:**  
Gallery Golmok (Noksapyeong station, line 6 exit 3)  
**Medium:**  
Art marketplace

3

**Artist Name:**  
Koki Tanaka, Masaya Chiba, Teppel Kaneuji, Yuki Kimura  
**Exhibition name:**  
Sculpture By Other Means  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 11  
**Location:**  
One and J. Gallery (Anguk station)  
**Medium:**  
paintings, photography, video art

4

**Artist Name:**  
various  
**Exhibition name:**  
Magical Realism in the Netherlands  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 12  
**Location:**  
Museum of Art Seoul National University (SNU station, line 2 exit 3)  
**Medium:**  
traditional to contemporary Dutch art

5

**Artist Name:**  
various  
**Exhibition name:**  
Night Flea Market Vol. 30  
**Running Dates:**  
April 7, 6 p.m.  
**Location:**  
Platoon Kunsthalle (Apgujeong station, line 3 exit 3)  
**Medium:**  
various

6

**Artist Name:**  
various artists from Asia  
**Exhibition name:**  
Nomadic Report Part II: China & Iran  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 15  
**Location:**  
Arko Art Center (Hyehwa station, line 4 exit 2)  
**Medium:**  
works from artists in residency programs

7

**Artist Name:**  
various  
**Exhibition name:**  
Papua Niujini Tribal Art  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 21  
**Location:**  
Moran Museum of Art (Maseok station, Gyeongchun Line)  
**Medium:**  
tribal art

8

**Artist Name:**  
Sora Kim  
**Exhibition name:**  
Abstract Walking  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 22  
**Location:**  
Artsonje Center (Anguk station, line 3 exit 1)  
**Medium:**  
art involving sound and light

9

**Artist Name:**  
Reinoud Oudshoorn  
**Exhibition name:**  
Dimensions  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 15  
**Location:**  
Gallery Skape (Hangangjin station, line 6 > taxi 32-23 Hannam-dong Yongsan-gu)  
**Medium:**  
sculpture, drawings

10

**Artist Name:**  
Paul McCarthy  
**Exhibition name:**  
Paul McCarthy: nine dwarves  
**Running Dates:**  
April 5 - May 12  
**Location:**  
Kukje Gallery (Anguk station)  
**Medium:**  
sculpture, installation

11

**Artist Name:**  
Eva Hesse  
**Exhibition name:**  
Spectres and Studiowork  
**Running Dates:**  
February 28 - April 7  
**Location:**  
Kukje Gallery (Anguk station, line 3 exit 1)  
**Medium:**  
Paintings, sculptures

12

**Artist Name:**  
leading Finnish designers and artists  
**Exhibition name:**  
Design Finland  
**Running Dates:**  
March 17 - April 14  
**Location:**  
Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul Arts Center (Nambu Bus Terminal station)  
**Medium:**  
Design culture and lifestyle

13

**Artist Name:**  
various  
**Exhibition name:**  
Gallery Seoul  
**Running Dates:**  
April 20 - April 23  
**Location:**  
Galleria Foret (Ttukseom station, line 2 exit 7)  
**Medium:**  
fine arts and music from 20 galleries

14

**Artist Name:**  
Michael Craig-Martin  
**Exhibition name:**  
Word - Image - Desire  
**Running Dates:**  
March 16 - April 29  
**Location:**  
Gallery Hyundai (Anguk station, line 3 exit 1)  
**Medium:**  
Conceptual paintings and drawings

15

**Artist Name:**  
Ernst Gampel  
**Exhibition name:**  
Ernst Gampel  
**Running Dates:**  
April 5 - April 28  
**Location:**  
Gallery LVS (Apgujeong station, line 3 exit 4)  
**Medium:**  
sculpture

16

**Artist Name:**  
10 artists; JimmySK, Dekal, \$2.50  
**Exhibition name:**  
2012 Art T-shirts  
**Running Dates:**  
thru April 29  
**Location:**  
Namisum Swing Gallery, Chuncheon City)  
**Medium:**  
silk screen printing

17

**Artist Name:**  
Thitz  
**Exhibition name:**  
Art Saves the World  
**Running Dates:**  
April 12 - May 2  
**Location:**  
Chungdamn Art Center (Cheongdamn station, line 7 exit 9)  
**Medium:**  
paintings and installation

18

**Artist Name:**  
May Nef  
**Exhibition name:**  
Through the Color  
**Running Dates:**  
April 28 - May 4  
**Location:**  
Gallery Golmok (Noksapyeong station, line 6 exit 3)  
**Medium:**  
Photography, films

19

**Artist Name:**  
Andrew Lane, Beth Livensperger  
**Exhibition name:**  
New York New Work  
**Running Dates:**  
April 6 - May 12  
**Location:**  
Gallery 4walls (Hakdong station, line 7 exit 1)  
**Medium:**  
paintings

20

**Artist Name:**  
15 international artists  
**Exhibition name:**  
John Cage, Nam June Paik and After  
**Running Dates:**  
thru July 1  
**Location:**  
Nam June Paik Art Center (take subway to Shinnonhyeon station, line 9 exit 6)  
**Medium:**  
sound art works from past and present

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# *Mussel Heaven at Al Matto*

Story by Elaine Knight

Photos by Ryan Noel





➤ Across from the Pinoy Mart in Haebangchon is Al Matto, a hip little restaurant serving Italian cuisine. Before you enter, prepare yourself for some of the tastiest “cozze” (mussels) on this side of the Han. My friend and I were not expecting much as we lived in Italy for several years, but we were pleasantly surprised. Al Matto’s modern setting creates a comfortable-meets-chic vibe. In front of its well-stocked cocktail bar sits partially mismatched furniture with throw blankets on the backs of chairs and windows frosted for the season, complete with a faux balcony. On a poster board inside was an intriguing proposition: Tell them a favorite meal you are missing from home (apparently from anywhere around the world), give them a date and they will make it for you. A multitude of possibilities flooded my mind; I’ve been craving all kinds of food from around the globe. But I refocused on the task at hand and looked at the menu.

They had an extensive pizza and cocktail selection. I am generally wary of thin-crust, Italian-style pizza in Seoul, so my friend and I ordered from the pasta and sandwich section. I tried the spaghetti with shrimp and pesto while my friend tried a dinner special, the Mortadella panini sandwich. The waiter asked us if we wanted an appetizer. I almost said no, until I heard a loud slurp from the table next to us. They were consuming the remaining broth from what had been a three-quart pot full of mussels. Seeing their joy, I ordered the cozze as well.

The mussels started our meal at a high point. It smelled heavenly from the kitchen as it was prepared. Done correctly, and not rushed, the scent of garlic and other spices filled the air. The smell filled me with anticipation and the mussels did not disappoint.



*On a poster board inside was an intriguing proposition: tell them a favorite meal you are missing from home (apparently from anywhere around the world), give them a date, and they will make it for you.*


They were tender, nicely cooked and had a little bit of kick – delicious and Italian, but sure to please the Korean palate as well. These reminded me of the mussels I could only get when in season back in Southern Italy. This set the bar high as memories of Pasta Amatriciana, my favorite accompanying dish to cozze, came to mind.

Unfortunately, the pasta was a bit of a disappointment. I was expecting a genuine pesto, but got more of an aioli instead. I enjoy garlic and olive oil as much as the next foodie, but I was expecting a real pesto sauce.

In addition, the pasta was a bit too “al dente” for my taste and was dry, despite a generous amount of olive oil. My friend appreciated the thin spaghetti and the pasta’s seasoning more than I, but agreed that the pasta came out tasting a bit dry.

I also sampled the Mortadella sandwich, served with a side salad. The ham was sliced thinly with brie cheese on Trevia bread that paired nicely with the saltiness of the ham. Although it looked unimpressive, it was not bad.

Observing others, I must say that the pizza did look respectable.

On the way out, I looked at the proposition on the poster and got their business card. What should I choose? Pasta Amatriciana, anyone? 

**Haebangchon — (Noksapyeong Stn. - Line 6)**

**Directions:** Noksapyeong station exit 2, take first left. Al Matto is about 150 meters up the street, past Family Mart

**Price range:** \$\$

1. **Mussels** *The mussels are the real reason to visit Al Matto.*
2. **Shrimp Pasta** — *Al Matto also has a selection of pastas.*





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# Real bread hits Gyeongnidan

By Josh Foreman



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F O O D & D R I N K  
Restaurant Review

At first the mozzarella sandwich looks innocuous. A cross-section reveals a large slice of pure, white mozzarella cheese sitting between two slices of tomato, sitting between two slices of Ciabatta. It looks good, especially that big slice of cheese in the middle, but mozzarella is a little too mild to anchor a sandwich, right? Then you take a bite. Not bad. Then you chew. Wow, that Ciabatta sure does have a lot of texture. Chew some more. Is that pesto? Some more. Balsamic? More. Big piece of soft mozzarella. By the time you take that last bite, the sandwich is innocuous no longer. It's chewy and soft and subtle. You will be sad to see that last bite go.

It's one of several sandwiches on the menu at The Bakers Table, a new bakery/café in Gyeongnidan. The bakery specializes in hearty, European-style breads that are pretty much non-existent elsewhere. Michael Richter and Min Kyung co-own the bakery. Richter, a native of Germany, pastry chef and restaurateur (Gecko's was one of his first ventures), lends three generations of baking expertise to the operation. A black and white photo of his grandfather mixing dough hangs on the wall not far from the giant mixer he uses to make all the bakery's bread. Yes, this isn't one of those "we get our bread from xxx" bakeries. They make their own. Most of it is so studded with seeds and oats and grains that a loaf could sustain you on a trek through Mordor. They also make brownies, tarts, carrot cake and jams in funky flavors.

The kitchen here is a craftsman's workshop, filled with raw materials and the tools to transform them. Chickpeas soaking in a big bowl is a good sign in a place that sells hummus. There are bags of oats and seeds and 20-kilogram sacks of flour ("high-quality USA") stacked around the place. They do their baking with a wall of high-heat industrial ovens.

The ciabatta dough Richter uses for his mozzarella sandwiches is left to ferment for 12 to 16 hours before it's baked. That accounts for the chewiness of the bread and the subtle flavors that come out during chewing. He also makes a BLT, ham and cheese, and crunchy panini sandwiches. They're between 4,500 won and 7,500 won. They have specials every day. When we went they were bratwurst and potatoes (11,500 won) and pan-fried chicken (12,500 won).

The space inside Bakers Table is limited, but windows all around help keep it from feeling cramped. There are several tables in the bakery, and Richter has Smithwick's Irish Ale on tap for those wanting to lounge.

"Now is a good time to do this in Korea," Richter said. "Many Korean people are opening up to this."



The kitchen here is a craftsman's workshop, filled with raw materials and the tools to transform them. Chickpeas soaking in a big bowl is a good sign in a place that sells hummus.



1. Bread - Most of The Bakers Table's bread is hearty, heavy and chocked full of grains.
2. Tarts - Egg tarts are one of the sweets on offer.
3. Bakers Table Interior - The inside of the bakery is dominated by a table stacked with baked goodies.

**Noksapyeong Stn. - Line 6**  
To get to The Bakers Table, walk straight out of Noksapyeong Station, exit 2. Continue walking straight at the traffic lights. Turn right and cross over the street on the green footbridge. The Bakers Table is at the bottom of the footbridge on the other side. Phone: 070-7717-3501



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*Slinging sushi, salads and scramblers at*

# T.G Brunch

By George Kim




➤ In the mood for an omelet? You got it. Sushi? Yep. Cream pasta? Burrito? Shepherd's pie? No prob. T.G Brunch, in Gyeongnidan, has just about everything, it seems.

Ken Choi, the owner, was born and raised in Seoul, but lived in the States for eight years. He was a sushi chef in Hawaii for six, and lived in California for two. While abroad, he learned the intricacies of the Western pallet. He returned to Korea and continued to cook for an foreign audience before finally opening his own restaurant.

He aims to fill just about any desire with his nine-page menu. T.G Brunch has it all: a whole range of breakfast dishes, burgers, salads, pasta, fish and chips, Cajun chicken, Philly cheese steak, wings, cheese sticks – even edamame. And of course, Choi puts his sushi-making experience to use, offering a selection of American-style sushi rolls. He has all the favorites: California roll, dragon roll, spicy tuna roll and Philadelphia roll in all its cream cheesy goodness.

***“He has all the favorites: California roll, dragon roll, spicy tuna roll and Philadelphia roll in all its cream cheesy goodness.”***

T.G's namesake is brunch, and they have plenty of options for that. Previously closed on Sundays, T.G is now open then (they're closed on Mondays). They serve brunch in the morning and all day. One of the most unique features on the menu is the “build-your-own brunch.” Diners can pick and choose what they like. T.G has all the normal fare: eggs, bacon, hash browns, beans, coffee. They also do eggs Benedict, omelets, stuffed croissants and breakfast burritos. Brunch sets are 8,000 to 13,000 won.

T.G is on the bustling main road of Gyeongnidan. One wall is decorated with paintings of dogs. Another is covered with a mural of London. Choi said it's his dream to one day own a café there. 



**Noksapyeong Stn. — Line 6**

To get to T.G Brunch, walk straight out of Noksapyeong Station, exit 2. At the traffic lights, turn right and walk up the street between Noxa and Le Saigon. T.G Brunch is on the left.



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# Risotto:

## The culinary confidence-booster

By Read Urban  
Photo by Elizabeth Papile

### Walnut & Squash Risotto

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of short grain rice (Arborio or normal Korean rice)
- 4 cups of chicken or vegetable stock
- 1/3 cup of white wine
- 1 medium onion, small dice
- 1/3 cup of walnuts, crushed
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1½ cups of diced kobocho squash
- 3 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Salt and pepper

Over a medium-low flame, heat two tablespoons of the olive oil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Put the chicken stock in another pan and bring it to a simmer. Add the onions to the olive oil and sauté for two to three minutes, until the onions are translucent. Add the garlic and cook for another minute. Season with salt and pepper. Next, add the rice and squash to the pot, stirring to coat the rice in the oil. Toast the rice in the oil for two minutes, or until it begins to smell nutty. At this point add the white wine. Bring it up to a boil and let the alcohol burn off. Begin to add the stock one or two ladles at a time to the rice. Stir the rice, making sure that there's enough liquid in the pot but the rice isn't swimming in broth. As the liquid is absorbed, introduce more stock. Start tasting the rice when the rice has been cooking for 13 to 14 minutes. You want the rice to have texture (similar to al dente pasta), not be mushy. When the rice is almost there, add in the cheese and the last tablespoon of olive oil along with another two ladles of stock. Cover the pot and let it sit for five minutes. Remove the lid, add the crushed walnuts and stir vigorously, binding all of the ingredients together. Check for seasoning and transfer to a large plate.



F O O D & D R I N K  
Urbs & Spices

› Friends are over for brunch. You've got something special in store, one of the most impressive and delicious concoctions in the brunch universe: eggs Benedict. You've poached your eggs (no easy feat), toasted your muffins. Now for that Hollandaise sauce. In go the yolks – whisk whisk whisk – the lemon juice – whisk whisk whisk – butter – whisk whisk whisk. That should be about it, aaaaand... what? My sauce... it's all... lumpy. And oily. And gross-looking. What happened?

Broken sauces, dauntingly complex recipes, deep-fryer disasters; these are the worries that keep newly initiated cooks awake at night. Cooking can be intimidating sometimes, and it is easy to become frustrated. But sometimes the best way to overcome those fears is to dive head first into one of the more mystery-shrouded secrets of the culinary gods. First up: risotto.

Risotto has gained a reputation for being time-intensive and difficult to execute. The truth is, it is easy to make a bad risotto, but just as easy to make a great one. Most of the ingredients are easily attainable right here in Korea. Luckily, Korean rice is a perfect understudy for the fancy Arborio rice used in traditional risotto. They are both short grain rices and contain a similar starch content (something that is crucial for risotto).

The rich texture of risotto doesn't come from the addition of cream (although butter at the end never hurts), it comes from the starch in the rice.

As you stir your pot of risotto, starch is released, thickening the broth and creating a creamy texture. This is as good enough a time as ever to dispel a myth surrounding risotto and stirring. You do not have to stir constantly. Don't worry about putting down the spoon to rummage through the fridge or answer the door. The risotto will be fine.


***"Sometimes the best way to overcome those fears is to dive head first into one of the more mystery-shrouded secrets of the culinary gods. First up: Risotto."***

I have two rules. First, make sure the stock is on a low simmer as you add it to the risotto. Adding cold stock to the pot will drop the temperature in the pan, giving you a longer cooking time as well as uneven cooking. I keep my chicken stock at a bare simmer in a small pot next to the risotto pot. I ladle in more stock when I see the rice has absorbed most of the last batch.

The second rule I follow is when I think the risotto is almost there, about two minutes before the rice is cooked through, I add another ladle of stock, toss in the Parmesan, cover it with a lid and turn off the heat. I let it sit for another five to seven minutes and soak in that liquid.

Don't open the lid, or hover. Walk away, check your e-mail, set the table, pour a glass of wine, anything but open the lid. When the time is up, give it a good stir and adjust the seasoning if it needs it. It should be loose, not stodgy and thick. A good risotto should spread out on the plate, but you don't want the grains of rice sitting in a pool of watery broth.

The recipe this month is for a squash risotto. You could use any squash – pumpkin, butternut, acorn – but I am using Kobocho because it is readily available in Korea. The technique is the same in almost every risotto you can think of. Once you get the hang of it you can start experimenting with new ingredients.

Next month I am going to take this risotto and delve further into the nightmarish territory of culinary techniques: deep frying. 

**About the author:** Read Urban, a Virginia native, spent years cooking in the United States before coming to Korea. He enjoys experimenting with Korean ingredients, eating at innovative restaurants in Seoul and creating favorites from home.



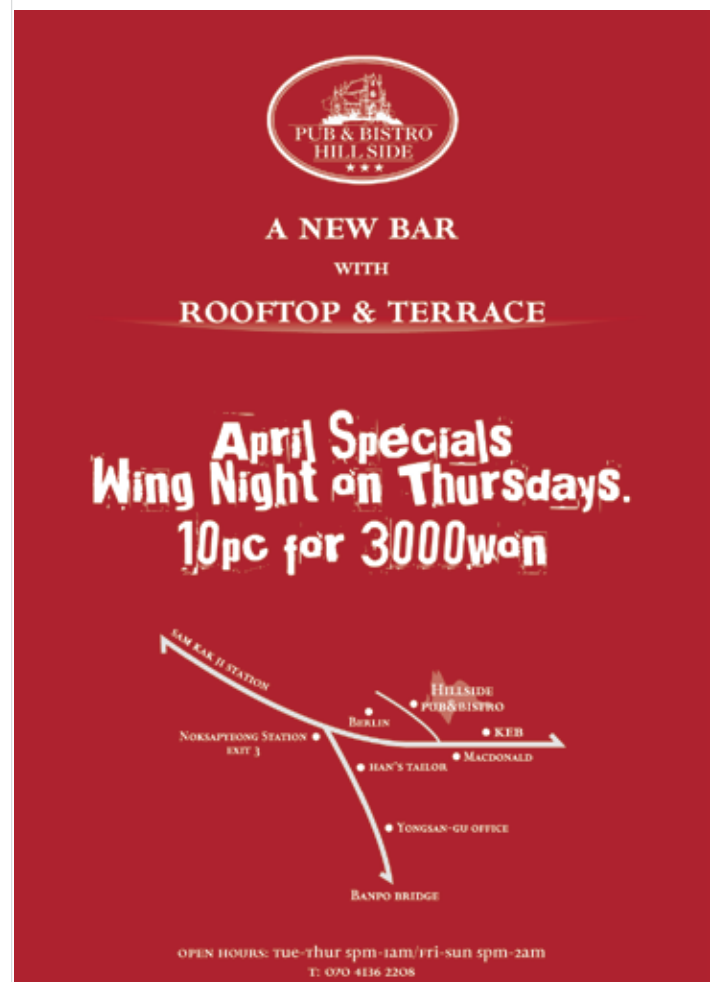
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# Sponge Cake

*even my mother could love*

By Paloma Julian

Photo by Flickr user Little Blue Hen



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F O O D & D R I N K  
Squid Ink

➤ I probably inherited my baking ineptitude from my mother. She's an awesome cook, full of ideas. She has a drawer full of recipes, and masters them without any problem. She's passionate, an artist. And cooking is art. But baking isn't. Baking is math.

Like me, my mother is absentminded, definitely not a perfectionist. Perfectionism is a must for bakers. If you're not precise, your baking tryst will be a bust. As I mentioned in a previous column, when I bake weird things happen. Something that's supposed to be spongy turns out rock-like. Something that's supposed to be sweet ends up tasting like the Dead Sea. Such a disaster.

But there is still hope for me, and people like me. I have found a foolproof recipe that works every time: Coc rapid (the name is Catalan and means "fast sponge cake"). I promise you that even a horrible baker like me can do it.

The strength of the recipe is in the measurements. Forget about spoons, centiliters, cups, etc. We'll be measuring this with a yogurt cup.



## Coc Rapid

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 1 cup of plain yogurt (no sugar added)

We'll use the yogurt cup for the next ingredients.

- 3 yogurt cups of flour
- 2 yogurt cups of sugar
- 1/2 a yogurt cup of olive oil (or any other oil that you like)
- 3¼ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tsp butter

## Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 175 degrees Celsius. While the oven is heating, mix all the ingredients except the butter in a blender until creamy.
2. Spread butter and flour on the bottom of a baking tin (25 cm is ideal). This will keep the cake from sticking.
3. Pour the mix into the baking tin and bake it for 40 minutes. Prick it with a needle or a knife; if it comes out clean, you are done.
4. Be creative and use this recipe as the base for apple cakes, chocolate cakes, coffee cakes, etc.
5. I really like to have it with strawberries and lemon. Here's the recipe for that variation:


*"Forget about spoons, centiliters, cups, etc.  
We'll be measuring this with a yogurt cup."*

## Strawberry and lemon topping

Ingredients:

Strawberries  
Zest of two lemons  
As much sugar as you like

Directions:

Clean the strawberries, cut them in half, put them in a bowl and add the lemon zest and sugar. Leave it to marinate for one hour minimum and then serve it with the cake. 

**About the author:** Paloma Julian is Spanish to the core, although she hasn't lived there in years. A woman of many talents, she enjoys bringing the nuances of Spanish food culture to Seoul's English-speaking community.




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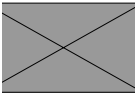
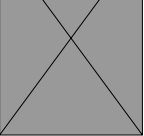
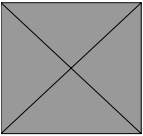
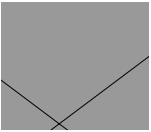
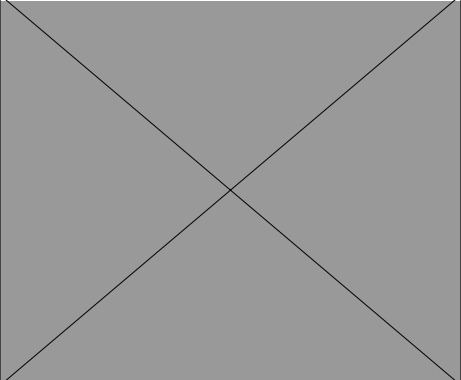
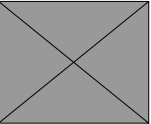
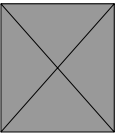
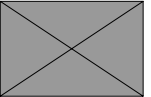

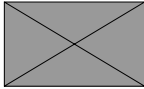



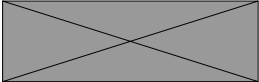
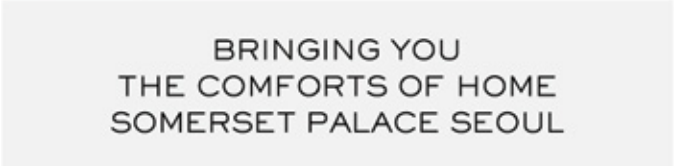
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# Out With God

Korea's only LGBT-affirming Christian  
congregation for speakers of English

Story by Ara Cho

Photos by James Little

Share your thoughts about this story on [groovekorea.com](http://groovekorea.com)



It was a balmy Sunday afternoon when photographer James Little and I met up to attend a service at Open Doors Community Church, the country's only LGBT-affirming Christian congregation for speakers of English. We walked up Itaewon Road until we reached the steep incline stairs, a few feet shy of Rocky Mountain Tavern, leading up to the Itaewon Land Sauna. After a brisk left from atop the stairs, just past the baby blue phone booth to our right and perched in the corner is a quaint yoga studio on weekdays and a Christian church on Sundays. Aptly named Well-Being Studio, it is a place dedicated to the physical and spiritual well-being of its patrons.

With 10 minutes to the service, we walked into the warm, well-lit room, which at first seemed more spacious than it actually is. It had mirrored walls and bright wooden floors and one wall had a charming mural of an endless green pasture. I was struck by its modest and cozy atmosphere.

I didn't know exactly what I was expecting to find in there, but knew what I saw wasn't it. In my utterly misinformed heterosexual mind, I was probably expecting to find something along the lines of rainbow-hued banners, posters opposing Proposition 8, some purple chandeliers, and oh, I don't know, a Lady Gaga shrine. Okay, maybe I went a little too far with Lady Gaga.

*"Open Doors Community Church is a church where a person can be completely open and honest without fear of ridicule or reprisal, a church that believes God's heart is full of compassion, not judgment. You can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or otherwise queer and at the same time, holy and wholly in love with God. Christian faith is far less about answers than it is about questions, and we at ODCC are on a journey together and the destination is love and justice."*

Pastor Daniel Payne

The space was humble and shabby-chic. Twenty neatly aligned chairs faced the far end of the room, where a projector screen displayed the theme of the sermon of the week, "Heaven and Hell," and a tagline that read "Radically Inclusive Love of Jesus Christ." With the contemporary R&B gospel playing in the background, this relaxed, unpretentious environment transported me back to the student lounge back in my college years.

Seated in the chairs were soft-spoken congregants enjoying friendly banter, chatting about their week and the hip new bar in town.

I was approached by Pastor Daniel Payne, a youthfully handsome man with a solemn air. He wore a genuinely warm smile and his piercing blue eyes complemented his ash-brown hair. With a stature of 6'4" (193 cm), black-and-white pastor garb and starched khaki pants, he somewhat resembled Edward Norton. I was still squinting my eyes to really gauge the level of his resemblance to the actor when he turned to greet the congregants one by one as they walked through the door. Guests received cheery "hellos" and nods from other congregants who were already seated.

The service began with an announcement of various items: an LGBT-Christian conference in Hong Kong in June that the congregation plans to attend, new additions to the parish library, a reminder of free HIV testing with the Korea Federation for HIV/AIDS Prevention, a trip to the Lady Gaga concert. The pastor also called attention to a hat in the back collecting money that will go towards the rent on the space they use every Sunday.

The progression of the service was nothing out of the ordinary: prayer and gospel singing, a few repetitions of the same, then the sermon itself and more gospel singing and praying followed by the final communal prayer, which was open to the participation of the congregants.

All the while, seated in the back row, I was frantically scribbling the words of prayers and the lyrics of gospels, hoping somehow to locate the struggle of homosexual identity that exists within some Christian faiths.

But any reference to homosexuality in the context of Christianity that I managed to find was universal to all human struggles, and just as applicable to any other heterosexual, non-LGBT-affirming congregation.

The prayers that seemed, at least remotely, relevant to homosexuality were: "Despite what many say, we know that God loves us for who we are" and that "(We) pray for God's guidance through (our) fear, doubt and struggle" and how "We pray not to have enemies in our hearts."



So really, I didn't hear a prayer explicitly geared towards issues of homosexuality, but rather I was inundated with the central tenet of the day: Love thy neighbor.

The sermon that followed was the first in a three-part series on heaven and hell, which was interesting given Pastor Payne's upbringing. Pastor Payne grew up in the Bible Belt of America – in Pensacola, Florida, to be exact. Growing up, he believed that clergymen who used the fear of damnation to whip the flock into adhering to the Christian creed were neither effective in inspiring true faith nor congruent with what he believed God wants.

I remember that most of the churches I went to also preached about the need to salvage the soul in order to avoid the eternally-burning flames of hell that are often depicted in medieval paintings of damnation, which leave nothing to the imagination with their sadistic and lurid portrayals of suffering.

*"Have you ever seen a tapestry in the making? All the tiny threads of yarn weave together in seemingly incomprehensible and chaotic ways. If you look at just one thread here or there, it doesn't make sense. I view Christianity as a big magnificent tapestry. You can't just focus on one small piece of yarn that you find disagreeable. You take a step back and look at the finished work because that's when you see the big picture. That's when you begin to understand the purpose of Jesus Christ."*

A congregant



After a 10-minute break following the worship, during which a portion of the congregation scurried out, the most interesting part of the service came: Bible study. I was ready to hear some radical, controversial take on biblical verses condemning homosexuality. The study session, as it turned out, was not unlike a theology seminar with long discussions of etymology, the historical context in which the verses were written and the supposed intended meanings of the words of Jesus Christ. The honest conviction and earnestness with which each congregant partook in the discussion would have encouraged the doubtful mind of anyone at any level of faith to also join in actively without fear of ridicule.

First, the book of Matthew (19:16-22) was read in a small circle of congregants. After the reading, each person spoke at length, some in broken English and some with a British accent, about what they thought it means to be a true Christian.

Being Christian, according to Pastor Payne, means not only understanding or having faith in God, but also, and necessarily, demonstrating that faith and the Christian core values of love and charity through generous acts towards our neighbors, meaning the poor, the needy and the ostracized.

He remarked on the universal presence of God, saying that "Christ is at work in many faiths" and "God's grace is present in all gracious, kindred acts towards the unfortunate." He gave Mohandas Gandhi as an example of the best kind of Christian, saying that Gandhi demonstrated and embodied what it means to act in His image. He then quoted Gandhi to illustrate that simply calling yourself a Christian doesn't automatically qualify you as one: "I love your Christ; I do not like your Christians." I'd have to say that what I was hearing in the Bible study so far wasn't as uncomfortable and irrational as Bible studies have always seemed to me.



That is to say they weren't terrorizing me into buying a ticket out of hell or glorifying God repeatedly with little logic or meaning, with the hope that faith would sink in during one of the repetitions. It was the first time I understood what it truly meant to be a Christian.

It was at this point that I realized that the issue of homosexuality would never be brought up unless I brought it up myself. So I posed some long-considered, potentially insensitive questions: "As you know, there are Bible verses that condemn homosexuality as an abomination. How do you cope with the idea that those very verses that denounce who you are as a group of people are the divine words of God? And further, that would mean that you are choosing to accept some verses while neglecting others, which seems to me like picking and choosing what's convenient. How do you reconcile such dissonance?"

I expected an awkward silence. I expected stares of masked hostility. Instead, what I got was remarkable and insightful input from all of the congregants, delivered to me in the most earnest and genuine way.

Pastor Payne first addressed the theological interpretations of the verses that supposedly condemn homosexuality.

"Since the Bible was written thousands of years ago, in the context of a society vastly different from ours today, to accept the literal meanings of a word or concepts that had yet to exist in the time they were written would be counterproductive to enhancing the understanding of Jesus Christ," he said. "Instead, I try to interpret the Bible in a way that is congruent with the life and teachings of Jesus Christ."

He cited Leviticus, saying the passage that talks about killing gay people would seem senselessly violent when viewed through the lens of Jesus Christ.

Another congregant offered an exquisite metaphor on her beliefs on this matter: "Have you ever seen a tapestry in the making? All the tiny threads of yarn weave together in seemingly incomprehensible and chaotic ways. If you look at just one thread here or there, it doesn't make sense.

"I view Christianity as a big, magnificent tapestry. You can't just focus on one small piece of yarn that you find disagreeable. You take a step back and look at the finished work because that's when you see the big picture. That's when you begin to understand the purpose of Jesus Christ."

I had to actually pause for a moment to savor the pure beauty of that metaphor. Brilliant.

After the service, feeling intellectually satiated and perhaps a teensy-bit spiritually charged, we all headed back down towards the Hamilton Hotel to grab some grub and God's best given gift of fermented wheat nectar.



One gay Korean congregant who has been with ODCC since its founding whispered to me between my second and third martini that Korean churches are neither welcoming nor supportive of ODCC. He then told me stories of the challenges, small and large, the congregation has encountered.

Last November, Pastor Payne was finally able to secure a place of worship at a Korean church in Bangbae that knew of the congregation's LGBT-affirming nature and still lent the space to the pastor. It was a feat accomplished after many, many unfruitful and trying months of searching that were marred by rejection after rejection, followed by chastising e-mails from English-speaking pastors in Korea. But it was a feat in vain nonetheless. The congregation was asked only a month later to vacate the premises after the church realized that the objective was not to convert these men and women to heterosexuality.

***"The LGBTQ community has been burned many times by the Christian Church, and some have been burned one too many times, and have given up on Christianity altogether. For this, I cannot blame them. It is my prayer, though, that any LGBTQ person in Korea who loves God, or feels drawn to God, but has been burned in the past, will find a home at ODCC."***

Pastor Daniel Payne

But all is cheery and joyous now that the current space provides a safe place of worship for a group of people that is truly diverse in terms of type and level of faith, understanding of Christianity and sexual orientation.

I asked the pastor what he hopes this place will become. He said, "I don't want a gay and lesbian ghetto. I envision a truly open and diverse place of worship – diverse in the true sense of the word."

After learning that I'm an atheist, he said that he is a fan of Christopher Hitchens and agrees with him in all that he finds deleterious with Christianity.

Let it be known that a favorable mention of Christopher Hitchens to an atheist is like the atheism-equivalent of shibboleth. Suffice it to say, I became a fan.

When I inquired further about his surprising choice of reading material, Pastor Payne said he enjoys reading across the board. His favorite authors/philosophers are Slavoj Žižek, Jacques Derrida, Leonard Sweet, John Cobb, John Caputo, Tony Campolo and Christopher Hitchens.



Pastor Payne, a central and the most visible figure (even beyond his Scandinavian height) of this "radically inclusive" Christian church, graciously shared much of his life story – some events that are private and some that hack at old wounds – trying to answer the genuine inquiries of congregants struggling with the question of faith and LGBT identity.

The pastor was born into the Free Will Baptist faith, went to a fundamentalist Christian school and married a Southern Baptist when he was just 19. "This was mostly an attempt to change my sexual orientation in order to make my family happy and soothe my own doubts about the morality of homosexuality," said Pastor Payne. The marriage lasted almost four years, after which he moved to Seoul in 2003 to start a new life, as far away from the toxicity of his early religious experiences as possible.

Having been married and divorced after four years at age 23 and having come out to a very fundamentalist Christian community that refused to accept him, he went through many years of questioning God and many years of being an atheist. He says it is okay and natural to have dwindling moments of faith.

It was through these dark years that the pastor gained a better understanding of the purpose that He had for him: "The LGBTQ community has been burned many times by the Christian Church, and some have been burned one too many times and have given up on Christianity altogether. For this, I cannot blame them. It is my prayer, though, that any LGBTQ person in Korea who loves God or feels drawn to God, but has been burned in the past, will find a home at ODCC."

He expressed a wish that through Groove Korea more people will come to worship and engage in an honest discourse on Christianity and what it means to reconcile with the cognitive dissonance that comes with the conflict of identities.

I asked what drove him to start and continue this movement.

The somber-voiced pastor, his deep-set eyes reflecting less sorrow than hope for, and confidence in, a better future, replied: "My experiences with Christianity in childhood and early adulthood were far from positive. The exclusion I experienced growing up in a fundamentalist version of Christianity propelled me to study the scriptures even deeper, and when I did, I discovered a God outside the box in which too many Christians try to constrain Him. I also saw sexual minorities hurting from the spiritual abuse heaped on them by the traditional Church. This was the antithesis of the God I know and experience as radically inclusive,




***"I also saw sexual minorities hurting from the spiritual abuse heaped on them by the traditional Church. This was the antithesis of the God I know and experience as radically inclusive, just and loving. And that God called me to this ministry – thankfully."***

Pastor Daniel Payne

just and loving. And that God called me to this ministry – thankfully."

Asked if he had any message for potential congregants, he said: "I would like readers to know that ODCC is a church where a person can be completely open and honest without fear of ridicule or reprisal, a church that believes God's heart is full of compassion, not judgment. You can be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or otherwise queer and at the same time holy and wholly in love with God. Christian faith is far less about answers than it is about questions, and we at ODCC are on a journey together and the destination is love and justice."

Leaving the happily-buzzed and chatty bunch of ODCC congregants at the busy restaurant/bar in Itaewon, I entertained the idea of returning next Sunday, not for Groove, but for myself. Don't get me wrong: I still am a flaming, die-hard (pun intended) atheist. But that doesn't mean I'm going to stop seeking answers to life's big questions. And for those who fathom those unanswerable questions, those who pore over Bertrand Russell and Spinoza, or those who simply want a Christian congregation that won't denounce them for their sexual orientation, and more simply put, for those who are curious or bi-curious, ODCC is a fine place to start. 



#### Directions

ODCC's service is held every Sunday at 6 p.m. at the Well-Being Studio in Itaewon.



#### Information

More information can be found on its website: <http://krccf.weebly.com>.

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent those of Groove Korea. To comment, e-mail [opinion@groovekorea.com](mailto:opinion@groovekorea.com). — Ed.



# A dog's day in Gangnam

Story by Alicia Trawick  
Photo by Lye Ko



➤ A fun, guilt-free alternative to ditching your dog for a vacation is catching on.

A Gangnam dog café has several options to suit any dog owner's needs. Caffe Pawz offers a very large and clean café with a full espresso bar and organic and homemade dog treats. There is also a groom shop, hotel, spa and an obedience school. The friendly English-speaking staff is available to help out with everything from giving your pup a bath to simply giving you advice on how to handle difficult behavioral issues.

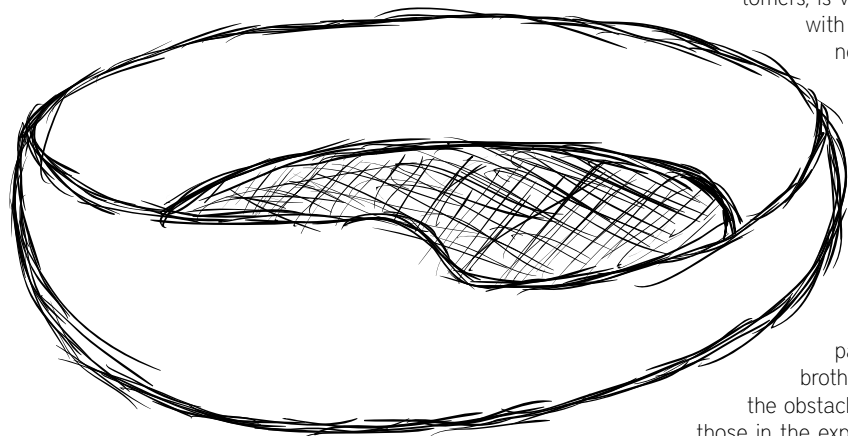
Thomas Moxham, from Australia, has been bringing his two Jack Russell Terriers, Nibbles and Lolly to Caffe Pawz since it opened in August 2010. They make frequent visits to the café and Nibbles and Lolly stay at the hotel while Moxham is away. "Our dogs love the café," says Moxham. "In fact, all we have to say to them is 'Do you want to go to the puppy café?' and they start going crazy with excitement."

The owner of Caffe Pawz, Choi Gang-hyuk, better known as Alex to his expat customers, is very friendly and understanding. He is often seen playing with his dog Gong-ju and chatting with customers about a new kind of dog food or training techniques.

"Next year I would like to open another café and obedience school in Itaewon," Choi said. "Until then, I hope to get to know the expat community more and learn about the needs of foreigners who own dogs in Seoul."

Choi laments that there aren't enough pet-friendly parks in Seoul. "In the city there is really no place for people to bring their dogs. It's almost as if Korean dogs have no fun, and I'd like to change that."

Choi's brother is the owner of the well-known, expat-friendly Dr. Pet animal hospital in Gangnam. The Choi brothers have always had a love for dogs. They understand the obstacles dog owners in Seoul are often faced with, particularly those in the expat community, and would like to offer a convenient and fun solution to owning a dog in Korea.



*"I love to travel, but I always feel guilty leaving my dog. It's a difficult decision to make, but after several visits to Pawz, Lucy began to really settle in and trust her environment. It was great to watch her be able to run free and interact with other dogs."*

— Kristen Otero

"I hope that foreigners can feel comfortable and safe here," said Choi. For some people, leaving their dog in the hands of strangers often results in a feeling of anxiety. For some, this can be so overwhelming that they have trouble enjoying their vacations. Kristen Otero, a university instructor from the United States, would attest to having experienced opposing feelings of insecurity and excitement. Otero is the owner of a 7-year-old Miniature Pinscher mix, named Lucy.

"I love to travel, but I always feel guilty leaving my dog," she said. "It's a difficult decision to make, but after several visits to Pawz, Lucy began to really settle in and trust her environment. It was great to watch her be able to run free and interact with other dogs; both of which she is unable to do on a regular basis." Otero explained that while she was on her last vacation, she received a surprise e-mail attached with photos and videos of Lucy.

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"It was wonderful to see her doing well and having fun playing with her friends," she says. "It made me feel reassured that she was being well taken care of; it was a great relief."

Those who own dogs that bark incessantly or dart at fearful passersby might understand the difficulties that arise in dog parenting and how crucial it is to have a well-behaved dog. Caffe Pawz's obedience school is fun for dogs and convenient for customers. The school offers a morning pick-up and evening drop-off service for nearby residents.

Lye Ko, a freelance photographer from Seoul, has a 2-year-old Golden Retriever, Luven. Luven has been attending Pawz's obedience school for about one year. "Before bringing Luven to obedience school, he was very troublesome," said Ko. "He would bark at other dogs and annoy people by over-welcoming them, but school has made a big difference in his behavior. Now, he is able to walk off of a leash with no problem."

Ko highly recommends the café and obedience school. "Here, you can meet people who welcome you and your dog. This place will change your life in Korea." GK

*"Here, you can meet people who welcome you and your dog. This place will change your life in Korea."*

— Lye Ko

#### Information

##### CAFFE PAWZ

**Where:** Gangnam-gu, Yeoksam-dong

**Phone:** (02) 564-0927

**Hours of operation:** 7 days a week/11a.m. – 11 p.m. (Hotel, 24 hours)

**Website:** <http://cafe.naver.com/cafe pawz>

**E-mail:** [cafe pawz@naver.com](mailto:cafe pawz@naver.com)

#### Directions

From Gangnam station, head south toward the Seoul Arts Center, take a left at the first major intersection. After passing Java City, go through one intersection and Caffe Pawz is on the right.

#### Prices

**Café:** Free

**Hotel:** 20,000 won/night

**Grooming:** 30-60,000 won

**Obedience school:** 400,000 won/month (Monday-Friday)

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# Zen AND THE ART OF Templestay

Story & photos by David Smeaton



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free stuff.





*We stopped on a hillside covered in huge boulders. With a commanding view of the city, we took a 10-minute meditation break. The goal was to clear our minds and listen to the sound of birds and wind: always focusing on the present. It was refreshing.*

► Our car crunched over the gravel and rocks as it drove through the entrance to Hwa Gye Sa (Hwa Gye Temple). Although I've lived in Korea for over seven years, and have visited hundreds of temples, I was admittedly nervous about my first templestay. I had agreed to attend the templestay with my friend Jarod – a Buddhist and templestay veteran – and I wondered whether I had been foolish to agree to go along.

We got out of the car and Serlina, one of the templestay volunteers, was waiting there to greet us. Our first duty was to register and have lunch. I always look forward to Korean temple food and we were treated to bibimbap (mixed garden vegetables, roots and rice), which had all been organically grown at the temple. The bibimbap was excellent and I felt ready for my templestay experience.

Hwa Gye Sa is an important temple. It was originally built in 1522 and has been rebuilt numerous times. It has survived fires, two wars and was abandoned during the height of Neo-Confucianism. Today it's the heart of Korea's international Zen Buddhism. The temple has an international Zen center that hosts monks from around the world. Hwa Gye Sa was also the home of Seung Sahn, one of Korea's most renowned monks, who passed away in 2004.

Hwa Gye Sa's templestay program is one of the most popular in Korea and hundreds of foreigners and Koreans participate every year. The concept of templestay began in 2002 when Korea cohosted the World Cup. The number of visitors to Korea exceeded Korea's World Cup expectations. As a result, most cities had a shortage of hotel rooms. The Korean government, in trying to find a solution, approached Korean Buddhist temples to provide accommodation for tourists. The idea was an enormous success and templestays have become a popular addition to Korea's tourism industry.



After lunch I met Bo Gwan Su Nim (Su Nim means monk), a female monk who is the templestay director. I also met the eclectic cohort of participants who would be in our templestay group.

We were nine in total. As well as Jarod and I, there were two young Austrian engineers who were in Korea on business. They were participating in the templestay out of general interest in Buddhism and mostly wanted the "experience" of a templestay. A Polish girl was also in our group. She was a Buddhist student who was traveling around Korea, staying at temples and learning about Buddhism. She told me that she'd discovered Buddhism in Poland. Due to Buddhism's limited presence in Poland she traveled to Asia to study more. She had read the works of Seung Sahn and it had inspired her to come to Korea.

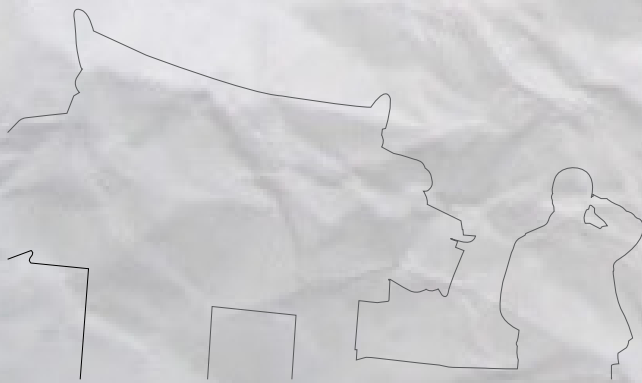
A quiet teenage boy was also in our group. He's half-Korean, half-American, and lives in Arizona. He'd become interested in Korea and Buddhism due to his mother's ancestry. He said that he hoped to become a monk after finishing high school and planned to stay in Korea, living at temples. Lastly there was a Korean man and his two sons. The man told us that he was Christian but had become somewhat jaded with Christianity and wanted to explore other ideas. It's quite common for Christians to come to Hwa Gye Sa out of curiosity and interest in Buddhism. The man's sons had reluctantly followed him to the templestay. The university aged son seemed interested in the templestay, but the younger son was more interested in chatting to friends on his phone. The man confessed to us that he hoped the weekend would help him and his sons bond together, as well as give them some good luck and a positive mind frame for upcoming studies.

After introductions, Serlina took us for a tour around the temple. We learned about Hwa Gye Sa's history as well as some basic Buddhist philosophy. Many of the temple buildings have friezes on the outer walls and Serlina explained some of the meaning behind them. In the main temple we sat on mats and Serlina taught us how to bow (prostrations). She also showed us how to bow when entering and leaving a temple.

One of the ideas that Serlina focused on was the concept of mindfulness. Essentially, we should try to live in the moment and not spend too much time reflecting on the past or wondering about the future. Mindfulness is a good way to help bring one's mind back to the present. We often do routine tasks mindlessly (such as eating, cleaning or walking). When we take off our shoes we should put them neatly on the rack. When we eat we should eat every last grain of rice. When we walk we should think about the steps and path we are taking, as well as enjoy the senses of nature. Everything was about being in the moment and making even the smallest task important.

Since the weather was nice, though cool from a late winter snow, we went hiking in the mountains. We were instructed not to talk but instead meditate and enjoy the scenery. Mindfulness. The hike was long and we had a great view of northern Seoul from an observation tower along the hiking path. As we walked we focused on the moment, each step on the slippery and rocky path. I felt like a character from a Kerouac story meditating on the walk and living in the moment. The path was icy in places and we had to cross frozen streams. Focusing on my steps kept my mind in the present and washed away all other thoughts and worries.

We stopped on a hillside covered in huge boulders. With a commanding view of the city, we took a 10-minute meditation break. The goal was to clear our minds and listen to the sound of birds and wind: always focusing on the present. We hiked on. We walked up to another small temple in the mountains and stopped for a break.







▼ **Information**

Anyone interested in participating in a templestay can contact Bo Gwan Su Nim.

✉ [zenseoul@yahoo.com](mailto:zenseoul@yahoo.com) ☎ (02) 902 2663





*The templestay was easier than I had expected it to be. I guessed there'd be lots of meditation and bowing, but it was fairly easy going. I resisted the temptation to check my phone; I laid down and listened to the sounds of the temple.*

This smaller temple didn't seem to get many visitors and was very quiet. I was happy there and imagined how Buddhist temples looked centuries ago before cars and daytrippers came to visit.

Our group began the long walk back to Hwa Gye Sa. The walk was pleasant but we had to be cautious as we trekked down the gravel paths. I noticed that the paths were dotted with old military bunkers and cement pillboxes designed to provide defense against a North Korean invasion. The bunkers were derelict and the cement was cracked and broken.

Eventually we found our way back to the temple by a different path. The hillside, thanks to local hikers and monks, was veined with walking paths in all directions.

The hiking and good weather left us feeling hungry. Dinner at the temple is early, so we returned to the dining hall. After another delicious meal of bibimbap I returned to my room for a short break. The templestay was easier than I had expected it to be. I guessed there'd be lots of meditation and bowing, but it was fairly easy going. I resisted the temptation to check my phone; I laid down and listened to the sounds of the temple.

For templestay participants, the evening was a series of meditation events. At 6 p.m. the monks rang the temple bell and we joined an assembly of monks and visitors in the main temple for evening chanting. None of us knew what to do so we followed as best we could. The chanting was deep and melodious, soothing to listen to. I bowed – following the other monks – and let my eyes wander around the room, taking in the golden Buddha statues as well as the hundreds of lanterns and smaller Buddha statues. After the evening chant, we went to the Zen room above the main temple. Bo Gwan Su Nim was there to talk to us and answer our questions about Buddhism. It was during this discussion that I learned Bo Gwan Su Nim had been one of Seung Sahn's students. She spoke fondly of Seung Sahn and I realized he must have been an inspiring person. I regretted not having learned about him earlier.

We then learned about silent meditation. Each of us sat on a cushion, cross-legged (or lotus position) and focused on our breathing. The meditation is designed to clear one's mind and help with relaxation.

We did silent meditation, followed by a short walking meditation, then another silent meditation. It was definitely calming even though it was often difficult to keep my mind clear. I had to focus on my breathing and catch my mind before it wandered to other things like work, football, and movies I had wanted to see.

Our first night of templestay was over. Temple life finishes early in the evening and starts early the next day. I returned to the small room that I shared with Jarod. I cleaned up and went to bed. I was keen to get lots of sleep, knowing that we would be up again early the next morning.



A knock on the door woke me up at 4:30 a.m. Surprisingly, I was already awake. I got dressed and headed to the main temple. At 5 a.m. the monks rang the temple bell and we all assembled for morning chanting. This time it was easier and I knew a little more about what to expect. I took up my position and followed the bowing. I had learned to listen to the monk's drum indicating when to bow and when to stand up. I was happy to have learned something and felt more confident following along with the chanting.

After the morning chant, we went back up to the Zen center to do another silent meditation session. This meditation was easier, but still hard on the legs. I felt I was getting better at focusing my mind and not letting my thoughts wander. Afterwards we talked a little more with Bo Gwan Su Nim and she answered a few more questions and discussed Buddhist ideas.

An early start means an early breakfast, so we went down to the dining hall for our final bibimbap. I fought my body's desire for a strong hot coffee and went outside for a walk in the cool morning air.

We had some free time after breakfast and Bo Gwan Su Nim took us for a hike in the hills. Being late winter, the sun hadn't risen yet. We got to see the sunrise and stopped to enjoy the moment. In summer, templestay participants usually do some kind of manual labor such as gardening or cleaning as part of their mindfulness training, however since it was still very cold the monks took us on hikes instead, which I think our entire group was happy about.

When we returned to the temple it was time for our most important session – 108 bows in the main hall. This was our final meditation. Since the templestay program is designed for foreigners, the temple prepared a CD that helped with the 108 bows. We sat on our mats and listened to the narrator who told us the meaning of the prostrations. Each bow represented some element of Buddhism; respect, correct thinking and mindfulness. We bowed to pay homage to the Buddha and we bowed to promise not to do evil, to respect all sentient life and understand other Buddhist tenants. The 108 bows took 20 minutes to complete. It was slow paced, making the bowing easier to complete and I was surprised when we were finished. Afterwards, Bo Gwan Su Nim sat with us again and talked to us about Buddhism and what the bows represented. Then we walked together to the abbot's chambers (formerly Seung Sahn's residence) for some green tea. The tea and discussion was the conclusion of the templestay. I asked Bo Gwan Su Nim about Seung Sahn and she told us of his life and his work to share Korean Zen Buddhism with the world. She showed us the small room that will become a museum dedicated to his memory. Bo Gwan Su Nim wished us all happiness and then we returned to our rooms to pack. As we were leaving I saw Bo Gwan Su Nim again and promised to return. Jarod promised to return regularly and participate in Hwa Gye Sa's Sunday Buddhism lectures that are organized by Hwa Gye Sa's foreign monks. We said our final farewells and gave each other a respectful bow. We got into the car and drove away feeling enlightened.

I kept my promise and returned the following weekend to visit Bo Gwan Su Nim. We had tea together and she surprised me with a small gift – one of Seung Sahn's books on Buddhism.

I felt honored to receive the gift. I plan to visit Hwa Gye Sa regularly and I look forward to returning again; especially in the spring when the hills are lush with green trees and the days are longer, allowing me more time to meditate, hike and enjoy the now. GK





# Ancient reflections in Gyeongju

Story & photos by Dylan Goldby

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## > In the blue-tinged twilight,

I make my way to the back of the park. The ticket office is not yet open. The gates are wide, and the morning wind rustles the leaves. How many people have heard this sound before? As the sun crests the horizon and shafts of light spill between the burial mounds, a sense of awe fills me. I am walking the path of kings, a path lined by ancestors and walked by descendants. Here lie the leaders who unified Korea. I walk through the park, nodding my regards to the occasional early riser, before leaving, humbled.

Gyeongju rises as I make my way through the house-lined streets around the park. The occasional car or moped reminds me I'm still in modern times. This is not enough to spoil my reverie, though. The chips and cracks in ancient roof tiles start me wondering about the structures I pass. Some are modern and well maintained. Others were built long before the town; the winding roads I walk were simply built between them.

I am lost in a daydream, one in which the streets are filled with market stalls, men dragging carts of freshly harvested barley, women steaming corn and the raucous laughter of makgeolli drinkers. It could almost be back then. Things were simpler then.

The sun is midway up when I see an old sign: Dosol-maeul. I had read about this restaurant before and now I had finally found it. Passing through the gate, a tendril of smoke stings my nose.

Folks in hanbok scuttle left and right. The compacted soil beneath my feet is a welcome relief from the paved roads of the morning.

After a bowl of "sungnyung," a drink made with water and scorched rice, my lunch arrives. It's spread across the polished-wood table by well-practised hands. I see some familiar dishes: kimchi, tubu-jeon, the usual chicken and fish in gochujang. Then there is the house speciality: tofu wrapped in steamed cabbage leaves. This left me wanting more. The wait staff are gone as quickly as they arrived and peace fills the air. Light filters through wall-to-wall windows while the drone of a heating unit buzzes, another reminder of the times.

Squinting back into the daylight, I walk left down the road. I'm back in the dream world of single-story shops, hole-in-the-wall stores, and endless streets.

The painted gates of a temple are wide open. I step in for a change of pace. The resident bhikkhuni bows deeply before returning to her tending of the temple grounds. I spend some time investigating the statuettes littered around the entrance and the weathered tiles of the path. I

round a corner and find hanging laundry. Deciding it impolite to continue, I wander out and start my walk to Anapji – Gyeongju's ancient royal pond. As I step over the rope fence (like everyone else) to get a closer look at the pond, it strikes me that like so many things in Korea, Anapji is part restoration. Originally built during the time of King Munmu – who now lies in the water tomb to the east of the city – Anapji has been restored to represent the glory of the Silla Dynasty. I step onto the banks of the pond and the perfect reflection of the sunset chases all thoughts from my head. I stare at a scene that must have left the kings of Silla just as speechless. Nobody speaks; the soft clicks of camera shutters are the only sound.

After the sun goes down, a short stroll across the road takes me to my final destination before catching the train back to Seoul: Cheomseongdae. Although it is lit by artificial lights now, by staying far enough away, I was able to experience what it was made for.

Gyeongju may be taking on parts of modern Korea, but it is still one place where the stars whirl overhead.



The city is famous for its traditional Korean architecture.

### Information

**Place:** Gyeongju – an ancient city, established as the Silla capital in about 57 B.C.

**When to visit:** Early spring or late autumn (off peak season)

**How to get there:** The KTX departs from Seoul Station every 30 to 60 minutes. Buses from Express Bus Terminal leave every 30 to 40 minutes. Commuter trains are infrequent but leave from Seoul and Cheongnyangni stations.

### Tips

- Use the early morning or sunset times to avoid the crowds.
- Get a map and walk within the city limits.
- Eat – Gyeongju Bread and Dosol-maeul (Address – Gyeongju, Hwangnam-dong 71-2)
- Transportation required – Bulguksa (the temple with the pagoda from the 10-won coin), Seokguram, the underwater temple of King Munmu.

1. Graves - Past royalty lies in mounds in the city.

2. Sunset - It's easy to shift into another era in Gyeongju.

## BACK PAIN?

- Low back pain
- Mid back pain
- Hip pain
- Knee pain
- Ankle pain
- Foot pain
- Foot disorders
- Jaw pain
- Numbness
- Scoliosis
- Sport injuries
- Neck pain
- Headache
- Lumbar disk
- Leg pain
- Cervical disk
- Shoulder pain
- Elbow pain
- Wrist pain
- Hand pain
- Whiplash
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# DETERMINED BUT DON'T KNOW

Story by Tyson DeWees

➤ One of the most daunting prospects expats have when they decide to exercise is how and where to start. In response, I always use a great quote attributed to Benjamin Franklin, "Failure to plan is planning to fail."

But what does "planning to exercise" mean? Well, first you need to understand some basics of exercise: How much exercise do I need? According to the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association, the average person needs about 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week. In general, they are talking about cardiovascular exercise; exercise for the heart and lungs, such as running, walking, or swimming. Is that all the exercise a person needs to stay healthy? It is best to add resistance training such as weight lifting or calisthenics (push-ups, sit-ups, etc.) and some stretching to have a well-rounded routine.

Again, the American College of Sports Medicine suggests two to three days of resistance training. Stretching is best performed daily.

When starting an exercise program, go slowly at first and gradually build your intensity. If you are not sure what intensity is, here are some simple formulas to measure intensity in regards to cardiovascular and resistance training. A simple formula for cardiovascular training is to calculate your target heart rate. This is done by finding your maximum heart rate, or 220 minus your age. When you find this number, just multiply a percentage. I would suggest 60 percent for beginners. Many commercial cardiovascular machines have built-in heart rate

monitors or you can buy your own.

For resistance training you can use a percentage of your one rep max or the amount of weight you can lift one time. This formula may be too difficult for beginners, so a good rule to use is to work out with the amount of weight you can lift 10 times comfortably. I tell my clients if you cannot lift a weight with good form then it is too heavy, but if you can lift a weight relatively easily then it may be too light. So with 10 repetitions as a target, I would say if you cannot lift the weight eight times it is too heavy, and if you lift it easily 10 times it is too light. Stretching has no strong guidelines, so it is a good idea to stretch after each exercise session and hold the stretch for about 10 to 15 seconds for three to five repetitions. Make sure to stretch the whole body and pay particular attention to the muscles that you trained that day.


If you are not sure how to organize your workouts for the week, take into consideration three things – intensity, duration and frequency. Intensity in this instance is how hard you exercise. If you work out in the upper range of your maximum heart rate or you lift weights with close to the maximum weight, this would mean you're exercising pretty hard, or with great intensity. Duration is simply how long you exercise. Are you doing a 10 kilometer run taking more than an hour or a light jog for 20 minutes?

# TO EXERCISE, WHERE TO START?

Frequency is also very easy to define; it is how often you perform an exercise. As in the information above, some frequencies of exercise are suggested for good health, such as five times a week for cardiovascular exercise. Although a high frequency is recommended for stretching and cardio, it would be unwise to try to have a high level of intensity as well.

To balance your intensity, frequency and duration look at your current physical condition and the daily time constraints in your life. I like to think of it as a video game where I have only so many points, which I must spread between the three characteristics. If one particular characteristic is high, then the others must be lower. For a high level of frequency such as exercising every day, it would be best to limit your intensity and duration. The same would apply if you exercise very intensely one day; you may want to limit the next day's exercise to a shorter duration and lower intensity. It may even be best to take a day of rest with perhaps some light stretching.

It is best to record your exercise so that you can see progress and adjust your routine as you become more fit. A simple notebook found at any stationery store should work.

Before you start any exercise program, consult your physician. 

**Tyson DeWees is director of personal training at Body & Seoul Martial Arts and Fitness Center. The opinions expressed here are his and do not represent those of Groove Korea. — Ed.**

***"When starting an exercise program, go slowly at first and gradually build your intensity."***



# HEALTHY HAIR, HEALTHY MIND

Story by George Kim

➤ Abe Masahiro spent most of last year traveling back and forth between Korea and Japan for business. He suffered from alopecia areata – a condition that causes round patches of hair loss – for 10 years before it worsened into folliculitis, which is the inflammation of hair follicles. After going a decade with little to no progress, Masahiro had had enough. Desperate, he walked through the doors of Lee Moon Won Clinic. And in only a matter of months he was cured. He was so satisfied with the results that he returned with his wife to treat her scalp disease.

The clinic offers professional examinations, treatment, prevention of hair loss, hair implants, customized toupees and medical cosmetics. In addition, the clinic provides hair salon services such as perms, dyeing and hair treatment. These services start at 30,000 won.

Lee Moon Won Clinic is a one-stop service for examination, treatment and prevention of hair loss and scalp maintenance. As the first medical institute in Korea to offer treatment, it has helped more than 40,000 people since Dr. Lee Moon-won started the practice in 2002. Of that total, 10 percent of the clinic's patients have been foreigners from more than 13 different countries. Most of these foreign patients visit Korea specifically for the clinic's treatment. "As we have accumulated numerous cases with foreigners in unique conditions, we are now extending our services to expats in Korea and we are confident that we can cater to expats' expectations," he said. Besides English, "we have Chinese and Japanese speaking staff as well."

In the case of scalp diseases, Western medicine tends to focus on the treatment of symptoms by applying anti-inflammatory, antibiotic, sebum restrainer and antihistaminic (medicines), according to Dr. Lee. As the methods are highly dependent on chemical medicines, the symptoms are likely to reoccur as soon as a patient stops the medication. However, Lee said that Oriental medicine is more focused on strengthening the immune system and ultimately curing the cause, although he admitted treatment can take longer.

"In the end," Lee said, "Oriental medical treatment enhances one's overall conditions and results in higher satisfaction for patients."

On average, Lee Moon Won Clinic combines three to four different treatment methods or medicines to treat scalp diseases or hair loss. The most popular and common combination is Yakchim (scalp injection), external application (application or spraying of medicine to scalp), and scalp massage (cleanse and strengthen scalp conditions). Chronic scalp diseases (seborrheic dermatitis or folliculitis) normally show improvements after three to four months of treatment and are com-

pletely cured within six months. However, alopecia can take nine months to a year for full recovery. These treatments entail a visit every week and cost between 3 million won to 8 million won in total.

"Our services and treatment are not limited to aesthetic purposes. Rather, we focus on helping one regain confidence and self-esteem," Lee said. He told the story of a female college student in her early 20s who had come to the clinic with her mother three years ago. "She was afraid of meeting people and was self-conscious of her hair loss, and eventually lacked any confidence at all and cut herself off from social activities. After we were done with her, she became active and confident."

Dr. Lee studied at Woosuk University, where he earned his Ph. D. in human anatomy in 2008. "It's unusual for an oriental medical doctor to study human anatomy, however I majored in human anatomy because I believe that Oriental medicine should be pursued in parallel with Western medicine," he said.

Although Dr. Lee devotes himself to treating and researching better treatments during the day, in the evenings he indulges in a little ice hockey. He said hockey is the best sport to maintain a physical and mental balance. "Ice hockey is an intense sport that requires both physical power and delicate control of the hockey stick, not to mention teamwork," he said.

Dr. Lee was born and raised in Jeonju, which he calls "the capital of Korean food and arts, as well as the origin of Oriental medicine." Korean authority regulates just one Oriental medical school per province. However, North Jeolla Province has two Oriental medical schools, demonstrating the region's contribution to the study and abundance of high-quality medicines in the region.

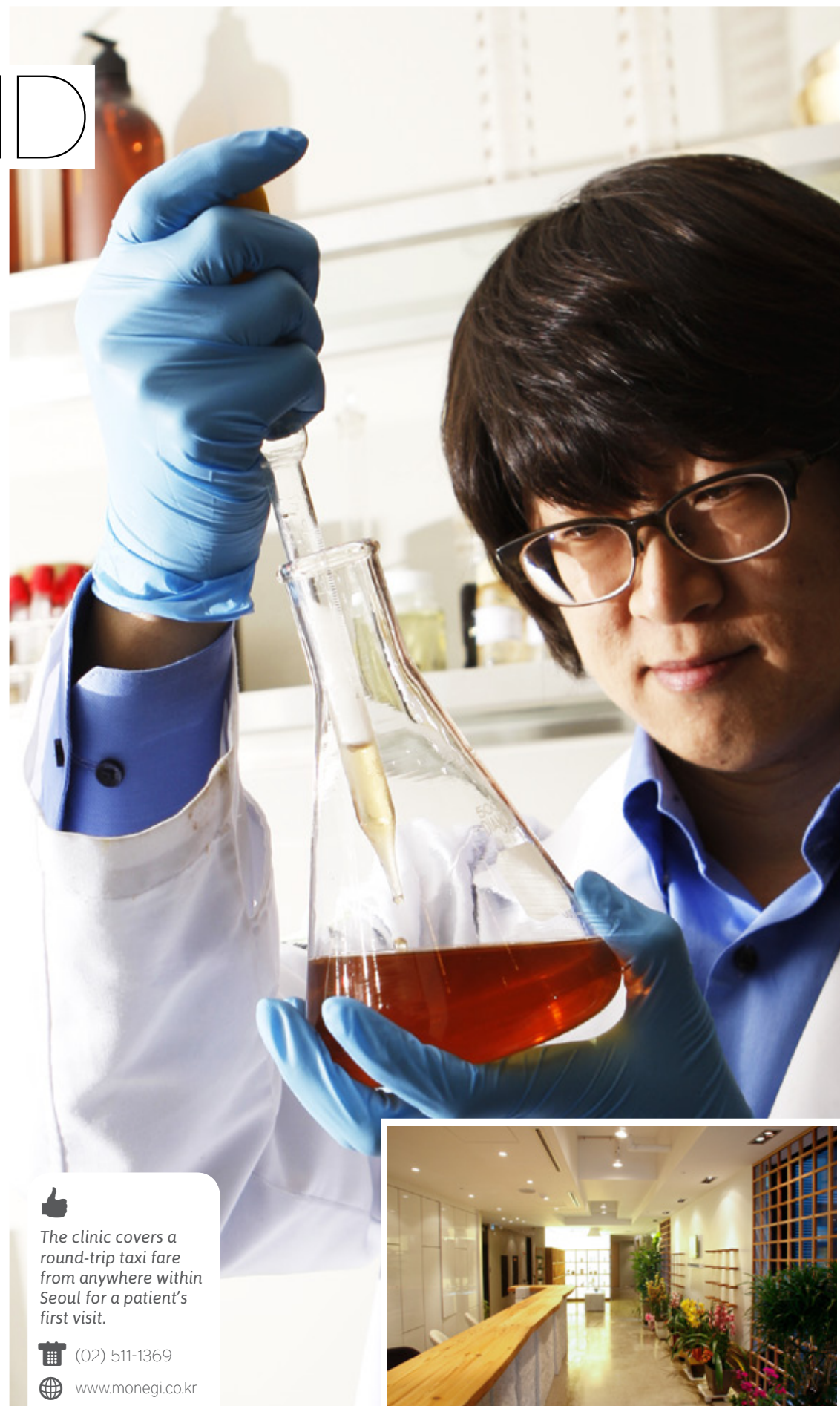
The clinic provides a hair loss prevention shampoo and hair care products co-developed by Lee Moon Won Clinic and a famous hairdresser. The products are approved by KFDA.

Its scientific and natural treatments have recorded no side effects so far.

The clinic's recent research has been focused on examination methods to evaluate the "health" of one's hair. The examination methods have started to be applied to patent treatment.

The clinic has two doctors and 14 staff, who see 30-50 patients per day and operates on a reservation-only system to allow them to focus more on each patient.

The clinic covers a round-trip taxi fare from anywhere within Seoul for a patient's first visit. 🚗



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# YEIN DENTAL CLINIC: DENTAL FEAR BE GONE

Story by George Kim



*"If you're scared to come to the dentist, please come see me. It's literally painless."*

— Yein Dental Clinic co-owner and chief dentist Dr. Bong Dong-joon

## > If you suffer from dental phobia,

then Yein Dental Clinic might be the solution for you. Co-owner and chief dentist Dr. Bong Dong-joon said he has treated many patients over the years who had suffered from this peculiar affliction – and his success rate is 100 percent.

"There are a lot of people who have dental phobia and I am proud of helping them overcome this. I am proud when I can see the change in them – that they are no longer afraid to get their teeth operated on," said Dr. Bong.

Yein Dental Clinic is located opposite Seoul City Hall. It has been open since 1999, but Dr. Bong has been on board since 2011. The other dentist is Dr. Chung Hyung-joo. He's known for providing "painless" treatment. Together they see 30 to 40 patients per day, which includes a trickle of foreigners.

Born in Seoul, Bong is 35 years old and has been a dentist for three years. His partner, Dr. Chung, has been a dentist for 22 years and is 48-years-old. "We want to introduce our advanced services to foreigners. Korea is known for advanced services when it comes to dental clinics. And among Korean dental clinics, ours is well known for its high-quality dental implants," said Dr. Bong.

He decided to become a dentist in his youth. "I used to visit dentists a lot. I wanted to be a dentist who could cure people without any pain, because as a boy I suffered from too much pain when I went there."

That has been the impetus for Yein Dental Clinic. Their customers return because they offer painless treatment and friendly staff and they maintain relationships.



### Their most popular services are:

- Tesceria Inlay: filling material for cavity; the advantage of this treatment is to have the most natural color and it's as strong as gold. It costs between 250,000 to 300,000 depending on size.
- Painless implants: These cost approximately 1.5 million per tooth.
- Wisdom tooth removal: Though not common in Korea, Yein Dental Clinic does quite a few of these operations. With insurance it costs 50,000 won.
- Auto tooth bone: The service removes then grinds a tooth to be remade into a tooth implant. It costs 500,000 won plus the normal cost of a tooth implant.

Due to its proximity to Seoul City Hall and many corporate headquarters in the area, Yein Dental Clinic sees quite a few business-people. Perhaps their most famous customer was the CEO of SK Telecom, Ha Song-min.

Both English and Chinese are spoken at the clinic. Dr. Chung practiced in Shingahi and is fluent in Chinese.

"If you're scared to come to the dentist, please come see me. It is literally painless," said Bong.



### City Hall Station 2 1

#### Directions

From City Hall Station, Line 2, take Exit 4,5. Walk around the corner from McDonalds. Yein Dental Clinic is on the main floor.

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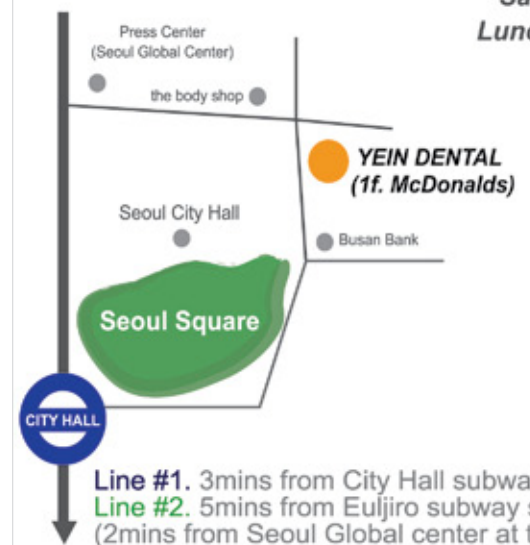
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 CAPTURING  
KOREA

Taken in Donaeko Valley near Seogwipo City on the southern side of Jeju Island, it was shot with a Nikon D200 at 24mm (ISO 100, f13, 10 seconds) in moonlight at about midnight.

90. GROOVE KOREA • APR. 2012



 CAPTURING  
KOREA

Taken in Donaeko Valley, Jeju Island.

[www.groovekorea.com](http://www.groovekorea.com)

91.



**"My advice to people developing an interest in photography and wanting to improve their skill would be to get outside. You don't have to spend a year in Africa or India."**

## CAPTURING KOREA

JEJU ISLAND

By Dylan Goldby

➤ Groove Korea is teaming up with the Seoul Photo Club to give readers tips on where to get the best snaps on the peninsula. The photographers will share tips on how and where they shoot. To compete in the Photo Challenge and win great prizes from Groove Korea, head on over to the Seoul Photo Club's website at [flickr.com/seoulphotoclub](http://flickr.com/seoulphotoclub).

Our second interviewee is Douglas MacDonald. MacDonald is a Canadian-born freelance photographer. He has spent 10 years documenting life and landscapes in Korea and is a regular contributor to the Jeju Weekly. His images have appeared in a number of other publications, including Groove Korea, 10 Magazine, Utne Reader, TriMag Asia and Dragonair's Silkroad Magazine. He won "Fine Arts" prizes in the 2010 and 2011 Jeju U.N. World Heritage International photo contests and his work has been displayed at the Jeju International Airport. He is also a Getty Images Artist.

**Give us a little background on yourself and your involvement in the Seoul Photo Club.**

I've been involved with SPC since the summer of 2010, drawn by the great diversity of photos in the group and a desire to improve my composition and cropping skill. There are lots of landscape, nightscape, cityscape, portrait and street photographer groups on Flickr, but it's rare to find a group with almost every type of photographer and photograph represented. You get the added

bonus of critiques from these talented artists. I liken the SPC group to a classroom in many ways. It's been an invaluable resource for me and has encouraged me to expand my interests from mainly landscape photography to other areas, in particular street photography and the use of silhouettes and blur.

**You have an extremely wide variety of images in your portfolio. How would you define your style?**

I wouldn't say I really have a specific "style." I could be wrong but I don't think anybody would say "Wow."

That's definitely a photo taken by Douglas. Rather, I pride myself in being able to shoot in nearly all situations at any time, be it a slow-moving landscape at 5 am or a fast-moving photojournalist assignment surrounded by dozens of other jostling photographers. I don't always succeed, of course, but I don't give up until I get at least one solid image.

Having said that, I would say I'm a photographer who tries to be in the right spot at the right time for that decisive moment. Instead of standing there and staring at that moment in admiration, I'm the guy who's trying to capture it with his camera.


**You have won a number of awards and had your images published in a number of publications. Any advice for up-and-coming photographers?**

The famous photographer Steve McCurry once said, "When people ask me how they can become a photographer, I almost never mention cameras, lenses or technique. I say, 'If you want to be a photographer, first leave home.' As Paul Theroux, a great writer and friend, further advises, "Go as far as you can. Become a stranger in a strange land."

**What makes or breaks an image for you?**

An image has to speak to me or reach me in some way. There has to be a story there, either through the light and colors of a landscape or the eyes, wrinkles and body language of a person. I'm not thinking of my images as photos but as narratives with a beginning, middle and end. The challenge is making all those components come together in the split second it takes to snap the shutter.

**What makes Jeju Island such a special place to photograph?**

Jeju is such a great place to photograph. It's rare to visit a place where you can photograph rugged, mountain scenery, nearly tropical beaches, and markets and street life all in one day. What more could a photographer ask for? 

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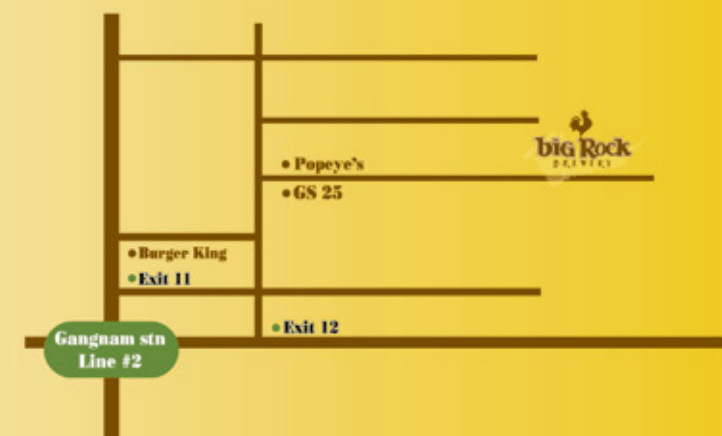
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### Listings

#### International clubs in Seoul

To add your club to this list, e-mail mattlamers@groove-korea.com. — Ed.

##### Royal Asiatic Society

raskb@koreanet.net / www.raskb.com

This non-profit organization offers lectures about Korea's history and culture, while also arranging tours to locations throughout the country.

##### The Australia and New Zealand Association

events@anzakorea.com / www.anzakorea.com

Catch up with them at the Grand Hyatt Paris Bar from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 20. Members are charged 12,000 won. Non-members pay 17,000 won.

##### The British Association of Seoul

basseoul@yahoo.co.uk / www.britishseoul.com

BASS is a vibrant and active social group for British expatriates and all nationalities. We seek to enhance our members' experience in Seoul, and provide hope and financial assistance to Korean charities in need.

##### Seoul International Women's Association

president@siwapage.com / www.siwapage.com

SIWA is open to women of all nationalities. Its monthly Coffee Mornings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Among its many other activities are twice-yearly classes for members by members referred to as Interest Groups.

##### Busan International Women's Association

biwadove@yahoo.co.uk / www.biwakorea.com

This association extends friendship and support to international women living in the Busan-Kyungsang-Namdo area. The group meets at Starbucks opposite the Busan Aquarium on the 4th Wednesday of the month. Members and non-members are welcome.

##### Seoul Writers Workshop

seoulwriters@gmail.com / seoulwriters.wordpress.com

SWW members meet every two weeks in order to read and critique each other's work. The aim is to provide opinions and constructive criticism. Work is distributed before workshops.

##### Helping Others Prosper through English

bedavinci@naver.com / www.alwayshope.or.kr

HOPE's goals are to empower children through education and to open doors of opportunity for tomorrow's leaders. HOPE is one of the largest volunteer-based foreigner organizations in Korea and is comprised of both foreign and Korean staff.

##### KOTESOL

www.kotesol.org

Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages is a professional organization for teachers of English. Our main goals are to assist members in their self-development, and improve ELT in Korea.

##### Overseas Chinese Women's Club

http://ocwckr.wordpress.com

This club meets monthly and is open to anyone interested in learning about Chinese culture and making new friends. Conversation is in Mandarin.



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## Dermatologists

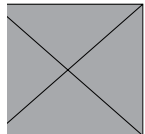
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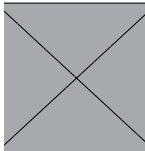
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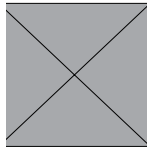
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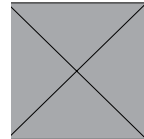


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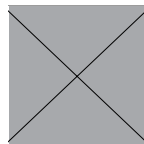
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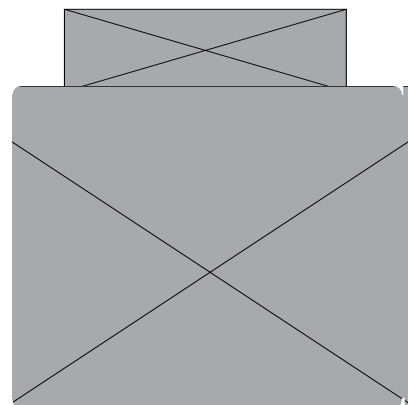


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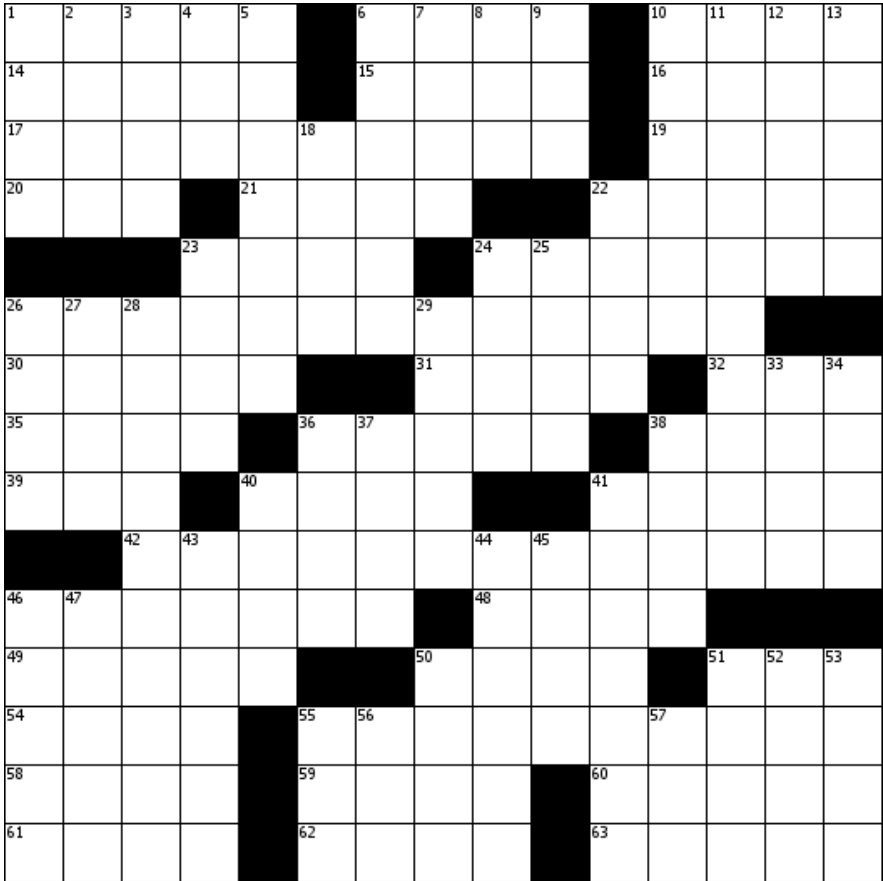


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TIP OF THE MONTH:

Looking at the grid, go over the clues for any 3-, 4- & 5-letter words. There are relatively few acceptable words of this length in the English language and so the same words tend to occur in many puzzles. This is also where a lot of crosswordese crops up. It's helpful to commit to memory many of the repetitive words, especially the crosswordese, that appear in crossword puzzles.



ACROSS

1. Chocolate substitute

6. Meerschaum, e.g.

10. Has the title

14. Greek marketplace

15. Mr. Roberts

16. Pull for

17. Gibberish!

19. Columba

20. Wheelhouse dir.

21. Sultanate of Arabia

22. Portable chair

23. Tiff

24. Breaks out

26. Boring thing to hear
30. Set out for display

31. Jelly for germs

32. Where truckers sleep

35. It has feathers and flies

36. Legal addendum

38. Predatory sea bird

39. Royal Leamington feature

40. Rollers with corners

41. Exhausted

42. Unsolicited opinion

46. Plays the ace

48. Pressure, in slang

49. Ransacks
50. Like many a winter sky

51. Psychic power

54. It may be drawn in the sand

55. Batman and Robin

58. Wing-shaped

59. Hardly illusory

60. Zenith's opposite

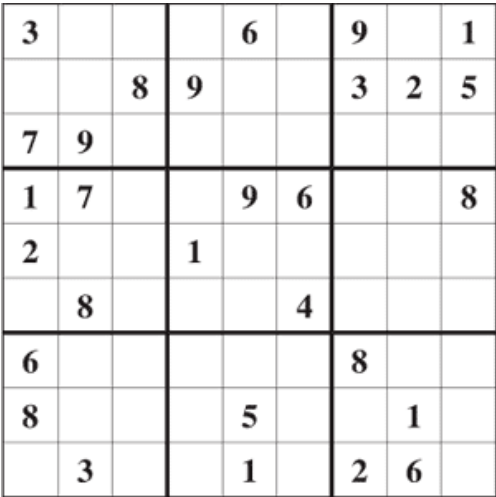
61. "The Laughing Cavalier" artist

62. Two-master

63. Prepare parmesan, e.g.

DOWN

1. Motor trailer
2. Literary conflict
3. Cad
4. Christmas bulb, e.g.
5. Nonsense
6. Non-computer chip?
7. Zagros Mountains locale
8. Chum
9. Reindeer's kin
10. Difficult experience
11. Boring thing to hear?
12. Astronomical phenomena
13. Brens' cousins
18. Radiate
22. Traumatize
23. Ella's music
24. Stropping result
25. Galactic bit
26. Youngsters
27. Envelop
28. Not reasonable
29. Weighted down
33. Rhody, in an old song
34. Cleansing vessel
36. "The Vampire Lestat" author
37. Readies the bubbly
38. Lady Macbeth's bane
40. Morse code symbols
41. Swinging from side to side
43. Irrigates
44. Slavery
45. Garment line
46. Islamic deity
47. All done!
50. Eat like a mouse
51. Old Norse poetry collection
52. Diamonds, e.g.
53. Dermal opening
55. Thirsty
56. Aye
57. Mercury or Saturn, but not Mars



HOW TO PLAY?

Sudoku requires no calculation or arithmetic skills. It is essentially a game of placing numbers in squares, using very simple rules of logic and deduction.

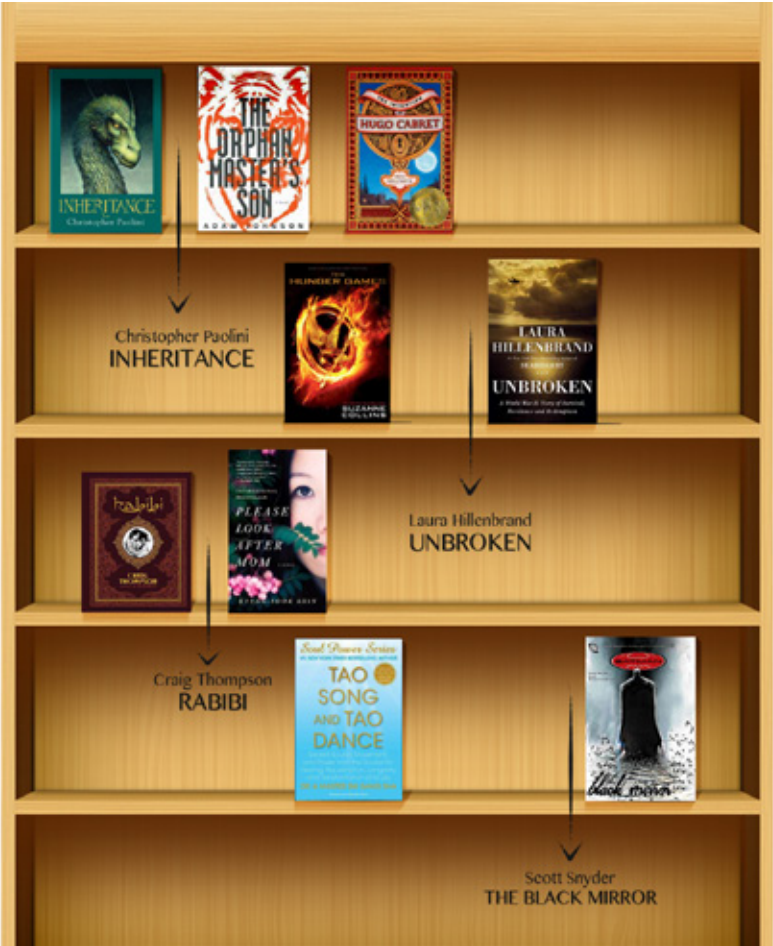
OBJECTIVE

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow. In a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:

- Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.

TIP OF THE MONTH:

Another Sudoku tip is to look for "naked quads." Naked quads are like naked triples with the exception that four cells contain only four distinct candidates in a row, column, or region. In the example at the left the naked quads are circled. They are 3, 5, 6, and 8. Remove any instance of these four numbers from the other cells in this row.

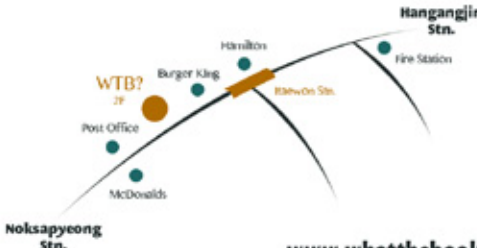


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Horoscope



**Aries**

Communication with partners is likely to be poor to nonexistent today, Aries. This isn't the time to enter into contract negotiations or other discussions that could affect your future in a major way. The prevailing mood is down, so whatever you decide today is apt to reflect that mood. It might be best to wait a few days until everyone is in a more positive frame of mind.



**Libra**

An invitation to a social event could come today, Libra, and you probably won't want to go. The people involved may not have anything in common with you, and you'll probably feel the event will be tedious and boring. Nonetheless, there may be business factors involved that could have you thinking you should go anyway. How urgent is the business?



**Taurus**

Whatever work you do today could go more slowly than usual, Taurus, as you're apt to be a bit distracted. You may be preoccupied with the past, especially with feelings and events you thought you'd long forgotten that affect your mood in various ways. This might be a good day to concentrate on routine tasks that you can do automatically, if possible.



**Scorpio**

Are you feeling a little under the weather, Scorpio? You may have been burning the candle at both ends. The obvious tip would be to slow down, but you might feel it isn't possible now. Get as much rest as you can and be sure to eat right. Ask for help if urgent work needs to be done. That way it will get done quickly even if your energy level isn't up to snuff.



**Gemini**

Phone calls and emails between you and your friends may get misplaced or otherwise go astray, Gemini. A little patience is called for when trying to reach anyone at this time, especially if modern technology is involved. If a matter is urgent, it might be best to do the old-fashioned thing and actually go see the person in question. That's the only way.



**Sagittarius**

A long-anticipated visit from a close friend or love partner may have to be postponed, Sagittarius. This could be rather disheartening. You may fear that the postponement implies that the visit will never happen, but this isn't the case. Your friend has probably run into a few snags that need to be straightened out. Be patient and hang in there.



**Cancer**

Delays and frustrations could plague you throughout the day, Cancer, especially regarding communications. A young visitor you're expecting at your home today could be delayed in some way and might not be able to call and let you know. Don't waste any time worrying. Your friend is probably safe and will eventually turn up. Hang in there.



**Capricorn**

Career matters may be put on hold today, as important communications you're expecting fail to come on time, Capricorn. As you're anxious to conclude the matters involved, you could make yourself crazy with frustration. Don't do this. Find something else to do while you're waiting and the time will pass more quickly.



**Leo**

If you've been thinking about taking a trip, Leo, this isn't the day to make plans. Whatever you learn today about airline schedules or hotels may not reflect the situation as it really is. If you wait a few days, things should go far more smoothly. If you already have plans to leave, expect some delays. Don't let them put you in a gloomy state of mind!



**Aquarius**

Short trips in your neighborhood may be rendered nearly impossible today by factors above and beyond your control, such as traffic, construction, or both, Aquarius. If you have errands to run, put them off. If you can, walk or ride a bicycle. If you must go in the car, however, make sure you have your favorite music with you so you can do something while waiting.



**Virgo**

A letter or phone call regarding money that you may be expecting may still not come today, Virgo. This could put you in a panic and cause you to want to phone those responsible to see what's going on. Don't be surprised if you end up playing phone tag. This just isn't a good day for any sort of communication. Your call will come.



**Pisces**

This isn't the day to take care of paperwork, Pisces, particularly if it involves money. Your mental processes are slower than usual, and you may find that you're easily distracted. Your mood won't be all that great either, so it might be a good idea to wait a few days before tackling tasks like this. If the work is urgent, ask for help.

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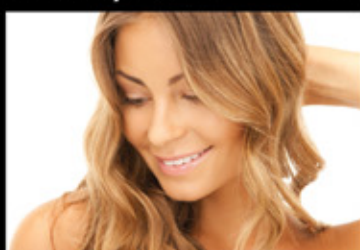
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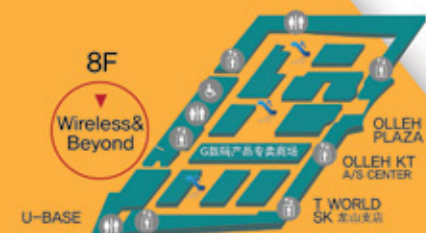
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